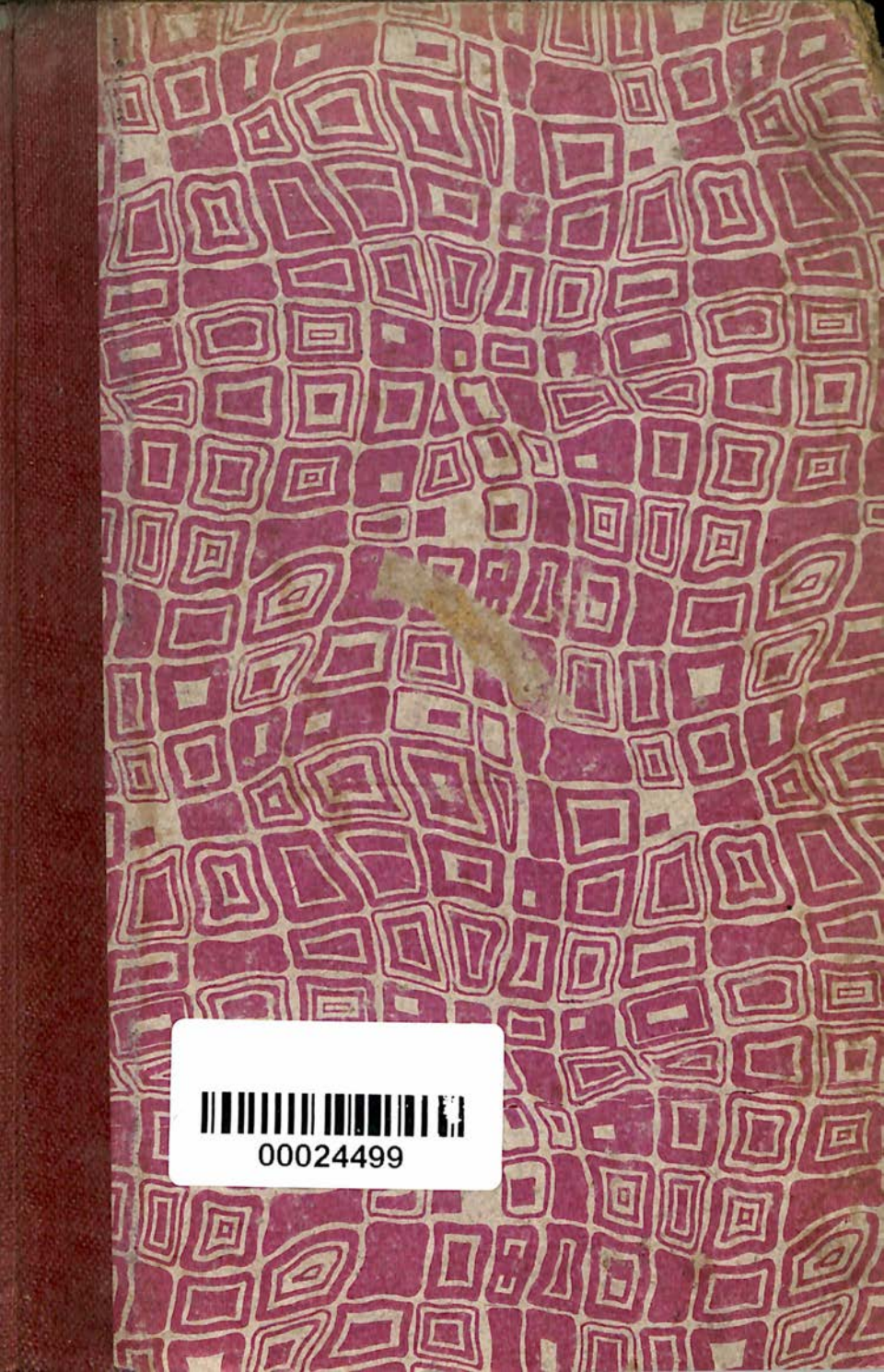
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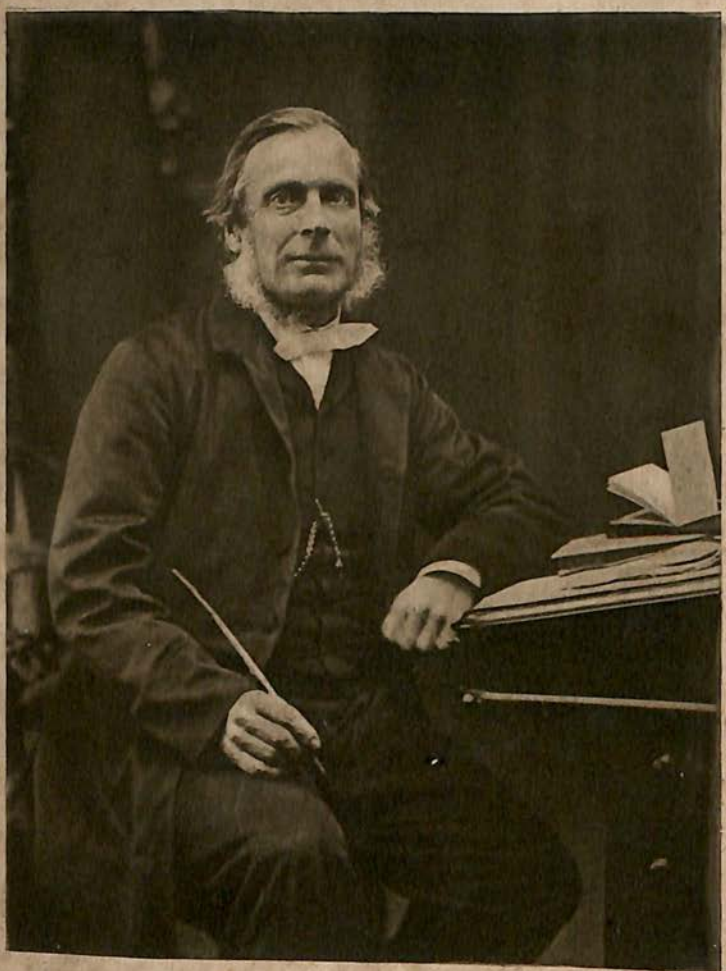
# LIFE OF EDWARD THRING



Walker & Boutall ph. sc.

Edward Burnie

# EDWARD THRING

HEADMASTER OF UPPINGHAM SCHOOL

## LIFE

## DIARY AND LETTERS

F.
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BY

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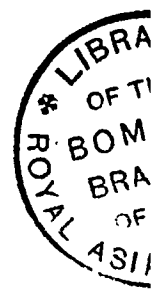


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THIS RECORD

OF A STRENUOUS LIFE

SPENT IN THE PURSUIT OF EDUCATIONAL TRUTH

I DEDICATE TO

MY FELLOW TEACHERS

THROUGHOUT THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD

# PREFACE

EDWARD THRING was unquestionably the most original and striking figure in the schoolmaster world of his time in England. During the last few years of his life he had come to fill a larger place in the public eye than any other English teacher. Abroad he was the only English schoolmaster of the present generation widely and popularly known by name.

"Thring is my ideal of the hero as a schoolmaster," was said to me by the head of the educational system of one of the Australasian colonies. The same thought, variously expressed, has come from many parts, near and remote, of the lands in which our English tongue is spoken. It is reverently cherished by great numbers of pupils who came under his immediate influence; by fellow teachers, men and women, who had learned to look upon him as a master and leader; and by many others who had fallen under the spell of his strangely stimulating and inspiring personality.

To this view there was an opposing note.

"I will have nothing to do with making a hero of

Thring," was the remark made by the head of another great English school, when asked to join in a teachers' memorial to the headmaster of Uppingham. There is reason to think that the words embodied the feelings of a group, small perhaps, but not uninfluential, among his English contemporaries.

To those who knew the man well this conflict of opinion seems most natural. There were types of mind and tendencies of thought constitutionally and instinctively repellent to Thring; in contact with them he withdrew coldly into himself. It may well be that the repulsion was mutual.

Besides this, his defiance of tradition, his equally resolute opposition to many modern tendencies of educational thought and work, his criticism of systems strongly intrenched and widely accepted, his undisguised contempt for what he thought false glory in schools, ensured antagonism as well as devoted following.

Between these opposing views I have no intention as a biographer, to attempt to decide. Nor would Thring have wished me to do so. "Let no one write Latin humbug, or English either, over my bones. No word of praise or blame, if they love me." These are his own words which confront me as I try to link together the story of his life. I take them to mean that he preferred to trust his reputation to the statement of fact rather than to the advocacy of friendship or personal loyalty.

He certainly thought that he had a mission in the world; that he had important educational truth to work out in concrete form, and to impress upon the mind of his generation. This belief he never concealed; he stated it as opportunity offered in speech and writing; through a long teaching life he strove to crystallise it in outward form and fact. Yet he looked upon himself chiefly as a sower of seed; that this seed of truth in schools should take root, grow, and fructify would have seemed to him of much more account than the settlement of any claim to heroic memory.

In using the material at my disposal for this biography I have kept in mind chiefly two classes of readers. The first consists of those who wish to extract from the records of a teacher's life the thought, experience, or principles which may be of practical use or suggestive value in their educational work; the other, that large class of pupils, parents, fellow teachers, and friends who, through reverence for the man himself or interest in the school which he built up, will value even slight details which throw light upon his mind and character, and upon the history of Uppingham. It has been with this latter class in view that I have made liberal use of the diary which Thring kept during many years of his life.

An effort has been made to arrange the matter so that the portions of professional or general interest

may be read advantageously apart from those which consist chiefly of personal or school details.

With the feeling that readers of this biography would wish to know what Thring was rather than what I thought of him, my plan has been to allow him, as far as possible, to speak for himself. The material for doing this has been for some periods very slight—for others so abundant that the chief difficulty has consisted in selection and arrangement. The one object I have kept in view in making my selections has been to elucidate the great principles on which his work was based.

In a few solemn lines written a few weeks before his death, but when he was still strong and had apparently many years of active work before him, Thring said to me that if ever anything had to be written about Uppingham and his work there, he would like me to do it. At the time when his unlooked-for death compelled a decision, circumstances made it exceedingly difficult for me to undertake the task; the terms of his request made it still more difficult to refuse if any record of his life drawn from his own papers was to be preserved. For the delay which has taken place in the completion of a task assumed under such conditions I have no apology to offer. The pressure of other and imperative duties has made it necessary to do the work at intervals during years filled with strenuous occupations in many parts of the world.

For the steadfast trust reposed in me by those most closely connected with him, and therefore most interested in the completion of this work, my grateful thanks are due.

No one can be more conscious of the imperfections of this record than myself. But if it helps in some slight degree to scatter more widely the seeds of that educational truth for which Edward Thring sacrificed and suffered so much, it will not have been written in vain.

G. R. P.

UPPER CANADA COLLEGE, TORONTO.

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# CHAPTER I

## CHILDHOOD AND EARLY SCHOOL LIFE

### 1821-1832

EDWARD THRING was born at Alford, in Somersetshire, on 29th November 1821. His father, John Gale Dalton Thring, was rector and sole landed proprietor of the parish of Alford. He married, in 1811, Sarah, daughter of the Rev. John Jenkyns, vicar of the neighbouring parish of Evercreech, and prebendary of Wells. Seven children, of whom Edward was the fifth, were the surviving offspring of this marriage.[1]

[1] Theresa, born 1815, married Rev. A. O. Fitzgerald, Archdeacon of Wells; died 1867.

Theodore, born 1816 (Eton and Cambridge), Registrar of Bankruptcy Court, Liverpool, 1862; judge in same, 1866; succeeded to his father's estate, 1874; died 1891.

Henry, Lord Thring, born 1818 (Shrewsbury and Cambridge). parliamentary counsel, 1869-86; K.C.B., 1873; created Baron Thring of Alderhurst, 1886.

Elizabeth, born 1819, died 1859.

Edward, the subject of this memoir, born 1821 (Eton and Cambridge), died 1887.

Godfrey, born 1823 (Shrewsbury and Balliol College, Oxford); Rector of Alford with Hornblotton; Prebendary of Wells; compiler of *Church of England Hymn Book*, and author of many well-known hymns.

John Charles, born 1824 (Shrewsbury and Cambridge); curate of Alford, 1855; assistant master Uppingham School, 1858-68; the Chantry, Bradford-on-Avon.

The Manor of Alford is on the lists of Domesday Book, in which special mention is made of a mill, the foundations of which are still visible in the bed of the small River Brue which flows through the parish. The country around abounds in places of historic interest. The fosse road which runs along the Alford estate was the great highway in Roman times from Exeter to Ilchester and Bath, and must have echoed to the tramp of many a Roman legion. A few miles off is Cadbury Castle, with its wonderful triple ring of trench and earthworks; its traditions of Arthur and Camelot; its certainties of British and Roman occupation. On another side are Wells and Glastonbury, with their almost unique architectural and ecclesiastical history. In later life the rich historic surroundings of his old Somersetshire home stirred Thring deeply, and no doubt had their influence in stimulating his youthful imagination.

The Old Manor House in which he was born, commonly known in the family as "The Cottage," has now disappeared. It was close beside the ancient village church, and was occupied by his father as the rectory until 1830, when, on the death of the grandfather, he removed to the family mansion, Alford House, a short distance off. Here Thring and his brothers and sisters grew up under the mingled influences of what was at once an affluent English country-house and a strictly-managed English rectory. Somerset is a hunting county, and the father's tastes made them familiar with horses and dogs. The rabbit warrens and pheasant coverts, which furnished shooting in their season; the Brue, where they fished, or bathed, or learned to manage the coracles, which are still reproduced in Somersetshire from the old British models; the fine bit of park with its noble trees, shrubberies, and

rookeries; the woods and fields and lanes of the estate;—all these gave ample room for the healthy outdoor life of the country. Here he imbibed that almost passionate love of nature, animate and inanimate, the intense interest in birds and beasts and plants which characterised him throughout life, and entered so much into his thought and teaching.

To Alford he always remained deeply attached. Writing to his mother in 1880 he says: "You cannot think how my feelings are bound up in much of Alford—so much so that I never allow myself to dwell on or call vividly to mind the dream that was not a dream of those old days. I could not bear it here with the incessant battle of life."

The village contained only a small farming population, and as country houses and rectories are not very close together in rural Somerset, in the life at Alford there was something of that isolation which not unfrequently makes for individuality of character in those brought up subject to its influences. But as the five brothers of the family were not widely separated in age, there was within the home itself abundant material for a cheerful boy life.

Other companionship was not entirely wanting. The most intimate holiday playmates of the boys were their cousins of the Hobhouse family, whose seat, Hadspen, is but a few miles distant from Alford. These cousins were also to win distinction for themselves in various walks of life. They included the present Lord Hobhouse, of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council; Bishop Hobhouse, formerly of the diocese of Nelson, New Zealand; and the late Archdeacon Hobhouse, of Bodmin, in the diocese of Cornwall.

The relations between the two families seem to have been particularly affectionate and intimate. One of the Hadspen family remarks in a note: "I have always reckoned on all Thrings as steadily as brothers, and I never found them fail yet." In Edward Thring's Diary for 1862 he says: "Looking over the obituary in the *Times* this morning, I came suddenly on the death of my dear cousin, Henry Hobhouse. A letter from my mother this afternoon told me of his very sudden and quiet end. It is a great blow, breaking up Hadspen again, where all our childhood's feelings were so familiar, and all our ideas so intertwined with the Hobhouses, our nearest relations almost." The companionship of two such groups of boys must have had a healthy and stimulating influence on both.

In holiday times the Hadspen boys came regularly twice a week to bathe at Alford, where the deep pools gave great opportunities for acquiring skill, especially in the art of taking headers. "There must have been something singularly inspiring in the waters of the Brue," writes one of the lads in later life to another, when exchanging congratulations on some new distinction gained.

It is, however, to his parents that we must look for the most powerful of the early influences which moulded Thring's character. But the respective influences of father and mother were in strong contrast. It was said by a keen and competent observer of men who knew John Gale Thring intimately, that he applied to the small details of family and parish government abilities which might have made him a great statesmen or a great general. His own early desire had been to enter the army, but he took orders in deference to the strong wish of his mother. The duties thus assumed were not, perhaps,

entirely congenial to him, but they were discharged with conscientious care and fidelity.

The parish was small, however, and the work light, leaving time for other things. He was a magistrate for the county as well as rector of the parish. He managed his own considerable estate. He had the fondness of English country gentlemen for outdoor life, and was known as the best and boldest rider in the county of Somerset.

Winchester School, where he received his early training, and St. John's College, Cambridge, where he was at the head of one "side" when Lord Palmerston was at the head of the other, had made him a sound and polished scholar. His two elder sons received from him the whole of their preliminary training for Eton and Shrewsbury respectively. The Eton tutors of his boys, as school letters show, consulted him with deference on questions of classical teaching.

If his teaching was sound his rule was rigid. He was a man of strong and unbending will, and none had better reason to know this than his own family. His domestic government was not merely strict—it was autocratic and exacting. To the children who left home the wish to escape from paternal authority was, it may be suspected, a strong impulse to vigorous exertion in making for themselves an independent place in the world. The children who remained at home knew little relaxation of this authority even when they were much beyond the period of youth. "The fact that the Thrings as boys and young men did not revolt against their father's arbitrary interference with the details of their daily life always seemed to me a striking proof of the depth and sincerity of their Christianity," was said by an intimate friend and

relative who saw much of the home life at Alford in the early days. "Just, but hard," is the description given by another.

A passage written by Edward when the prospect of training a young family lay before himself, throws light upon this side of his early home life, and shows the impression of lack of sympathy which it produced upon him.

"Let us," he says, "learn to sympathise and bear with our children. Authority should be love. May we learn to treat them when grown up no longer as children. They will be wiser in many things in their generation, growing as they do with its growth, than we shall be with all our experience. The experience of the old deals rather with the principles of life very often than with the details of a younger generation.

"It is better to draw out the feelings of children, even if the growth to a careless eye be somewhat too luxuriant, than to chill them back into a more precise culture, losing their hearts in the process. It is better to let children find experience in their own little world and roam in it with them, than to lift them up into your castle, even though it be a castle of truth, and enclose them in its stone walls."

There are indications in Edward's correspondence and diaries of an almost exultant sense of freedom when at last he was quite free to think and act on his own responsibility, without consulting home authority—indications which pretty clearly prove that that authority sometimes seemed a heavy burden. Yet throughout life he had for his stern old father a deep and sincere regard mingled with admiration. "Our gallant old father," he often calls him. For his good opinion he

was ready to do and endure much; no praise for work done, and such praise was always hardly gained, did he value more than his. Behind the iron will and exacting disposition were a truth of character and a fidelity to duty which won and retained respect, if not the most tender forms of affection. They might well win and retain it in a son whose own character had in it elements which peculiarly fitted him to understand that of his father. Who that ever knew Edward Thring does not at times recall the vice-like grip of his jaws, the rigid stiffening of his lip, when he had made up his mind to sweep some obstruction from his path, or to crush insubordination; the fierce light which flashed from his eye as he denounced the school sins with which he had to deal, or the greater sins of the greater world beyond? His nature, indeed, seemed to have two sides, almost contradictory—verging even on the antagonistic: one a resolute energy of fixed purpose in the defence or assertion of what he thought right, which was ready to bend or crush whatever opposed it, and which had at times little to distinguish it from the temper of a despot; the other a tenderness of sympathy and humility of mind that made him seem like a little child in his relations to all around him. These were not mere moods,—they were innate characteristics which dwelt in him side by side. That the sterner side of his character—what many thought the arbitrary turn of his mind—may be explained on the strictest lines of heredity, all who knew his father would probably agree. That the gentler side of the man may have a parallel explanation seems equally clear.

The father lived till the age of ninety, dying in 1874, after he had seen the completion of his son's

constructive work at Uppingham, with which, in its earlier stages at least, it must be said that he had little sympathy. The ripe old age which he attained, however, was far exceeded by that of the mother, who long survived her husband, and died in 1891, in the one hundred and second year of her age, and no less than eighty years from the time when she came to Alford as a bride.

Mrs. Thring belonged to a family remarkable for its scholastic connections. Her ancestors had been beneficed clergymen in the county of Somerset for seven consecutive generations. Her eldest brother, Dr. Richard Jenkyns, became distinguished first as a tutor and subsequently as Master of Balliol College, Oxford, at the period when that ancient foundation was beginning to rise to that singular eminence for finished scholarship which it still holds among the other colleges of the university.

Dr. Jowett, the late Master of Balliol, has described Dr. Jenkyns as combining in himself a mixture of the dignitary of the Church, a college Don, and a country gentleman, and as the person who had done more for the college than any one else in recent times! Later he was appointed to the Deanery of Wells, continuing to hold the Mastership of Balliol for some time in connection with this new post. A successor at Wells has recorded that he "showed for his cathedral the same large-hearted energy which he had shown before for his college."

Another brother, Henry Jenkyns, was a fellow of Oriel, and afterwards professor of Greek and Theology at Durham University. An elder sister became the wife of Dr. Thomas Gaisford, the eminent scholar and Dean of Christ Church. Mrs. Thring was the second

daughter and by no means the least remarkable member of this distinguished and intellectual family. Those who knew her in middle life remember in her a rare combination of mental activity and of Christian character at once gentle and firm. To those who saw her in her later years she presented a wonderful picture of a happy and interesting old age. Till long past ninety she retained her faculties almost unimpaired; her handwriting was as firm and clear as in middle age; her memory keen and retentive; her literary interest scarcely diminished. The death of Edward in 1887 gave her a great shock, followed by a severe illness, and after an interval by a slight stroke of paralysis which deprived her of the power of speech. Even then the degree in which she retained her intellectual powers was extraordinary. She took the liveliest interest in literary conversation; no touch of wit or humour, however delicate, was lost upon her; a striking or well-expressed thought irradiated her face with smiles. The gentle and resigned patience with which she endeavoured to convey by signs to her nurses the wishes she could no longer express in words indicated a self-control quite remarkable. Once, and once only, after long and unavailing efforts to make her wants understood, did she burst into tears of vexation.

The impression made by her character on her children was profound, and it was not merely one of tenderness. "Mother's idea, too, was that everything should be sacrificed to work and duty," says one of her sons. "A more saintly woman in practice and faith, I believe, cannot be found," writes Edward in his Diary. He dedicated to her his last volumes of sermons, and always awaited her criticism on his work, and especially on his religious teaching, with the deepest interest.

"Dear mother," he says on an anniversary, "sent me a letter which I hold to be one of the great rewards of my life."

"He never spoke of his mother without a tender dropping of his voice, which made one feel that all that sweetness and tender sympathy which was so marked a characteristic of him was an inheritance from her," writes a friend who had lived on intimate terms with him for years.

Two reminiscences seem worth recording, as indicating her habits of life or views of training. When more than ninety-five years old, and when the failure of her sight made reading difficult, she was able to recite from memory, and with seldom a mistake, the alternate verses of the Psalter, when her nurse, as was usual, read with her the Psalms for the day. The circumstance suggests that Edward probably owed to his mother his curious familiarity with the Psalms, and his marked habit of finding in their words a channel for the expression of his deepest feelings.

Once when asked for recollections of Edward's earliest years, his mother said that he "never seemed so happy as when he was lying on his face on the floor reading." A neighbour used to relate that, making a call one day at Alford, she discovered the lad, then six or seven years old, thus disposed in the library, and completely absorbed in a huge volume of Indian history. The visitor remarked to Mrs. Thring that it seemed a mistake to let the boy read a book so much beyond his years. The mother's reply was that no book which awakened such deep interest could be considered beyond a child's years. Half a century later Thring said that his most vivid conceptions of India were still those which he had derived from this volume.

Of one of his later visits to his mother, Thring says in a letter to a friend :—

I was happy enough to be able to spend a fortnight with my dear mother at Christmas. There is little to say. She was most bright and fresh, with a laugh like a child at any little bit of fun, taking great delight in having flowers near her, and very lovely she looked in her aged calm with the beautiful blossoms and leafage close to her. She gradually gets weaker, without pain or even discomfort, being drawn, you may say, slowly into light. I always thought, and now I have seen that the departure in peace should be rightly a happy, gentle passing of life to life : there is no mourning in the house; my sister-in-law last week said of herself, that one was filled with "solemn rejoicing." She has a lady nurse attending on her who has quite won her heart. It was pleasant to see her love for her nurse. The end on earth is very near now, we think. When some six weeks ago she had an attack of illness, she was heard in the night praying gently, and saying "how happy she was." To us the mixture of joy, bereavement, and peace is the strangest and most incomprehensible feeling—the irreconcilable reconciled, and yet not quite.

But she was destined, as I have mentioned, to outlive her son. In what has been said may be discerned the two chief forces from which Edward Thring derived his character and early impressions : on the one side a stern paternal authority grounded in a deep but severe sense of Christian duty; on the other a singularly beautiful illustration of Christian life which was tender as well as strong.

It seems pretty clear that during many years the gentle mother thought it well at times to act as an intermediary between the strong-willed father and equally strong-willed son when they came into conflict on questions of judgment. The result was not always of the best. In a note which was apparently inspired

by some experience of this kind in his early Uppingham days, Edward says :—

> Anything is better than one parent dealing with children through the other. Let all be honest and open affection, and the end will be happiness. But confounding the separate relations and differences of father and mother will but keep them from ever knowing their children, who cannot express their deeper and intimate feelings in a general form, in a lump, as it were; whilst the children will mistrust and suspect an intercourse which they never can reach the exact truth about, writing neither to father nor mother, but to a shifting something made up of both, and will in consequence gradually cease to open their hearts unreservedly at all.

But differences vanished as time went on, leaving at last only the tender reverence of a Christian son for Christian parents.

There is some reason to suppose that his father found the task of bending Edward's strong childish will less congenial work than teaching his elder brothers, and that this was in part the reason why he was sent away from home for education at an earlier age than they were. His first school, to which he went shortly after he was eight years old, was a private one at Ilminster, a town about sixteen miles distant from Alford. This school was at the time considered the best in that part of England, and was much patronised by the country gentlemen of Somerset. It was probably equal to others of the period, and the master had a reputation for ability as well as for severity. This entry occurs in Thring's Diary at Uppingham forty-five years later :—"Mrs. S. also told me she had been to see Mrs. Allen, wife of my first schoolmaster at Ilminster, and that she was immensely interested in the work here. This too came on me as a voice from

another world, and I sent the old lady the book of Uppingham photographs, which has pleased her immensely. Both she and her husband worked very hard and never spared themselves, and though the school was dreadfully mistaken I believe they meant well."

But the immediate impression which the school and its methods made upon the lad was decisive and lasting. "All my life long," he said in a public address in 1885, "the good and evil of that place has been on me. It is even now one of my strongest impressions, with its misery, the misery of a clipped hedge, with every clip through flesh and blood and fresh young feelings; its snatches of joy, its painful but honest work—grim, but grimly in earnest—and its prison morality of discipline. The most lasting lesson of my life was the failure of suspicion and severity to get inside the boy world, however much it troubled our outsides."

Only a year or two before he died, when driving from Alford towards Ilminster with a dear friend, he said that the feeling of horror and dread which, as a small boy, he used to feel for that journey to school still came over him upon the road. "And," he added, "it was my memories of that school and its severities which first made me long to try if I could not make the life of small boys at school happier and brighter." The evidence shows clearly enough that this long remaining impression of restriction and misery had sufficient cause. One brother remembers that he was flogged for "a very little laugh" at dinner, when talking and laughing seem to have been alike forbidden. Another finds that his only recollection of pleasure at the school was in the hour of bedtime, and in one day

during the half, when a master took the boys to visit some neighbouring quarries. At all other times they could only exercise themselves within the playground, which was surrounded on all sides by high walls. A trying change this for boys after the free, outdoor life at Alford. An old schoolfellow remembers that Edward's "talents" made him a favourite with the headmaster. He also states that the lad's inclinations already showed themselves in his fondness for "acting the schoolmaster" with a small class of boys whom he would get together and coach in their lessons. But whatever slight pleasure he got in this way, Ilminster left on his mind not only the strongest repugnance to an atmosphere of suspicion and restraint in the management of boys, but inclined him to look upon the larger freedom of a public school, with all its temptations to license, as on the whole infinitely preferable to the other. It was an entirely new and different school-world which opened upon him when, after three years at Ilminster, he was removed to Eton.

## CHAPTER II

### ETON

### 1832-1841

IT was in the autumn of 1832, while Dr. Keate was still headmaster, that Thring came to Eton. He was first entered as an oppidan at the house of Mr. Chapman, afterwards Bishop of Colombo, and later at that of Mr. Goodford, who subsequently became headmaster and provost.

The distinction between collegers and oppidans existed then as now at Eton. The opportunity which this great and ordinarily expensive school has always offered to its seventy scholars of securing an education on very easy terms made parents desire to get their sons placed upon the foundation as collegers. The pecuniary advantage of this was greatly enhanced half a century ago by the fact that from Eton a boy on the foundation proceeded in due course to Cambridge to become a scholar, and finally a fellow of King's College, the scholarships and fellowships of that foundation being then reserved entirely for Eton collegers. But the advantage had its qualifications. When Thring came to Eton, places upon the school foundation were not, as now, won by competition, but were secured simply by nomination.

Strangely enough these valuable nominations were easily obtained. The numbers provided for by the foundation were seldom full. Even so late as 1841, the year in which Thring left, there were only two candidates for thirty-five vacancies. This state of things is sufficiently explained by the inefficiency of the discipline and organisation among the collegers, and by the treatment to which lower boys were subjected. Parents who wished to avoid the worst evils of Long Chamber, and yet secure the advantages of the scholarships, entered their boys as oppidans, and allowed them to remain such until the extreme limit of age was reached at which they could enter upon the foundation. This was the course pursued in Thring's case. His eldest brother, Theodore, who preceded him at Eton, was never on the foundation, but finally became captain of the oppidans, as Edward became as a colleger captain of the school. The latter remained at the school as an oppidan about three years, and then entered on residence as a colleger in 1835.

An intimate companion of these days, the late Rev. J. C. Keate, son of the headmaster, was wont to recall the cheerful courage with which he reconciled himself, from a sense of duty, to a change which was extremely distasteful to him.

Of his oppidan life only the barest hints can now be recovered. Mr. Chapman was also tutor and housemaster to Theodore, and as the latter was now about completing his school course, and had, apparently with a fair chance of success, competed in two successive years for the lately established Newcastle scholarship, the tutor's letters to Alford deal chiefly with the elder brother and his prospects. Of Edward in his first year at school he reports: "The little fellow goes on well too,

but is not quite so steady at any but his poetical work as I would wish." In the following year he says: "The little fellow goes on capitally. He is a sharp, clear-headed, good little boy, and will, I hope, turn out a tasteful and correct scholar." Again in 1834: "Since I last wrote little Edward has been doing well on all points, and has secured his reward."

Mr. Chapman's letters to Thring's father show that he was one of those conscientious, painstaking tutors whose labours did much to mitigate, for the boys who happened to be under their charge, the admitted evils of the Eton system of his day. They prove clearly that under the direction of these tutors, if not in the class-rooms, much hard reading was done by boys of ability who were willing to work. The account which he gives of one of the earlier examinations for the Newcastle scholarship indicates the breadth of classical reading and the practice in composition which were looked for in the best pupils at Eton at that time, or, at anyrate, the standard which the masters set before themselves. He says:—

Our examinations went off well. The successful candidate was a pupil of Coleridge's, the boy on whom all calculated. Having been successful at Oxford a year previous he entered the arena quite a practised gladiator. The examination continued five days: the first four all on paper; they then classed nine (three of whom I am glad to claim) and examined them in Xenophon and Cicero *viva voce*. The first day was wholly divinity—Matthew and Acts with miscellaneous questions. For the three following days they had to translate passages from Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides, Sophocles, Theocritus, Virgil, Horace, Livy, Pliny, with miscellaneous questions to each.

In composition they had Latin elegaic verse, Latin theme, Greek hexameter, all original. Greek iambics from Shakespeare, Greek prose translation from Robertson, and Latin prose from Spectator. Pretty sharp work, but they stood it fairly, and next year there will be hard fighting. The divinity

and original composition were the strongest points, the translations much the weakest. We must put Theo. into training, for the competition will become more honourable every year. Of thirty candidates nine were selected. It will infuse a very right spirit into the school, and introduce a more healthy feeling, if I may so call it. . . . I mean that *saps* must triumph; no boy will carry it by talent only, the examination is too wide and general, the auxiliaries too few for a boy to trust to himself. No dictionaries or lexicons allowed.

For Mr. Chapman Thring always entertained the greatest regard and veneration. Twenty years after leaving Eton, when about to build his chapel at Uppingham, he records with great delight, and as a happy omen, the fact that the first subscription paid towards it was from his old tutor, then Bishop of Colombo, and he adds: "I rejoice that it comes from one whom I honour and respect so much as I do him. It has cheered me greatly."

And again in 1868 he writes: "I was glad to send Bishop Chapman one of my books. I have such a great respect for him, from the memory of the efforts which he made at Eton, under most impossible circumstances, in old days, to do his duty by each boy, and the ability which almost made it not impossible, at a time when the idea of doing something for every boy entered no other heart or head of living schoolmaster as far as I know."

After the restraints of Ilminster the first years as an oppidan at Eton gave the boy a wonderful sense of free life. Mr. Chapman was strict as a disciplinarian, but, as masters then went, not severe. One of his pupils of that period mentions particularly that he was not in the habit, as some masters were, of sending up boys to be flogged by the headmaster, but that he usually dealt with them by other means in his pupil room. In dis-

cussing the question of corporal punishment at Uppingham, Thring mentions in a letter to a parent that experience had made him well aware that the birch very distinctly abraded the skin of a boy, but whether this experience was gained at Ilminster or Eton does not appear. He seems, however, to have escaped the severer side of Eton life in this respect. In the matter of fagging, also, he was fortunate. He and his friend Mackarness were fags to his cousin, Arthur Hobhouse (now Lord Hobhouse), and no doubt the severities of the system were mitigated by the cousinly friendship of the boys, which was continued throughout life.

Still the period of Thring's entry was not one at which a boy was likely to imbibe milk-and-water views of school life. He entered, as has been said, in October 1832.

It was at the end of the previous term, on 30th June 1832, that Dr. Keate made a noteworthy addition to the many traditions of Eton. In order to crush an incipient rebellion he flogged at one time more than eighty boys. The lads were summoned in detachments from their boarding-houses after having retired for the night, and the work of punishment went on from ten o'clock till long past midnight. All names on the alphabetical list of the school from the letter M onward were subjected to this manifestly impartial discipline. From the headmaster's point of view the result justified the exceptional effort. The boys cheered him as he withdrew from the field of action, and his authority was never after seriously questioned. Great severity of rule has always been attributed to Dr. Keate, and many of the tales, some apocryphal, some true, which illustrate this, are ridiculous enough. But those who knew him

best are united in affirming that he was really of a singularly kind and gentle nature. The fact seems to be that when Keate took the headmastership of Eton he did so under the fixed impression that the place could only be held by an iron hand. This opinion was in a measure justified by the public school traditions and the prevailing temper of the time. It was still strong in Thring's mind when he himself became a headmaster, much as he wished to mitigate the severities of school life.

Mr. Chapman resigned his assistant mastership while Thring was yet an oppidan, and for a short time the boy was transferred to the house of Mr. Goodford. For Mr. Goodford, also, who afterwards became Provost, Thring always entertained a high regard. But the limit of time was soon after reached at which he could be placed on the foundation, and in 1835 he went into residence as a colleger.

It is difficult now to picture adequately the school life to which this change introduced him; still more difficult to realise that the conditions in which he was placed could have existed in the most famous of English schools only half a century ago. It is said that Archdeacon Hodgson was induced to accept the provostship five years later, in 1840, chiefly by the wish to do something to better the condition of the collegers. It is little wonder that the circumstances should have deeply moved the mind of a thoughtful and conscientious man, little wonder that they should have suggested ideas of school reform even to a boy, and in later life given energy to the war which he waged on the barrack system of dealing with boys. We have a sketch of the domestic arrangements for the collegers written by an impartial hand.

The nominal number of boys on the foundation was 70, and for these four dormitories only were provided. There was accommodation for 52 boys in Long Chamber—a room 172 feet long, 27 wide, and 15 feet 6 inches high—and for the remaining 18 in Lower Chamber, and in Upper and Lower Carter's Chambers, two smaller rooms which took their name from an usher in the early part of the eighteenth century. These rooms contained little beside the wooden bedsteads, 4 feet 6 inches wide, and a series of bureaus. Chairs and tables did not exist except for the privileged few, and the wind whistled through the gaping casements. Candlesticks were made by folding the cover of a school book, and cutting a hole in the middle of it to receive the candle. A college servant was supposed to sweep the rooms daily, to make the beds, and in winter to light the fires; but this was all, and he did not sleep on the premises.[1] In point of fact the lower boys always had to make the beds of the 16 seniors, viz. the ten collegers in the sixth form, and the 6 in the "Liberty" at the top of the upper division; and also to fetch water for them overnight from the pump in Weston's Yard. They themselves, and members of the fifth form, had no chance of washing in college, for they had neither washstands nor basins. A deputation which waited on one of the authorities about the year 1838, with a request that a supply of water might be laid on in college, was dismissed with the rebuff, "You will be wanting gas and Turkey carpets next."

A boy who passed unscathed the ordeal of a colleger's life must have been gifted in no common degree with purity of mind and strength of will. Without dwelling longer on this painful topic, it should be recorded that in 1834 the writer of a pamphlet entitled *The Eton System of Education Vindicated*, was obliged to admit that, wherever the fame of Eton had spread, the name of Long Chamber was "a proverb and reproach."[2]

[1] Writing to his brother Theodore in 1873 on the question of necessary school expenses, Thring says: "A great deal can be saved by the cheap and nasty in training, *e.g.* by such proceedings as we had in college at Eton—one ill-paid servant to 70 boys."

[2] Maxwell Lyte's *History of Eton College*, pp. 411-13.

In a paper apparently prepared for some school magazine, there is a slight but graphic picture, in Thring's own words, of the Long Chamber, and the chances it gave to boy life. After speaking of Ilminster and the school methods pursued there, he says:—

At the opposite pole to this, perhaps the old Long Chamber at Eton, now done away with for years, may be placed, with its seventy boys locked up from 8 P.M. till next morning, utterly without supervision, left entirely to themselves in the great, bare, dirty room in which they were supposed to live and did sleep. Who can ever forget that knew it the wild, rough, rollicking freedom, the frolic and the fun of that land of misrule, with its strange code of traditional boy-law, which really worked rather well as long as the sixth form were well disposed or sober? Oh! the unearthly delight of the leaping matches at the end of each school time when, all the mattresses spread on the hard oak floor to pitch on, and one to take off from, the collegers celebrated their Olympic games. Then the squibbing matches, and that memorable night when suddenly, in the midst of a well-contested fight, dimly descried amidst the smoke, the headmaster appeared, like "Titan on the misty mountain top," blazing with wrath, calling, as well as the dense cough mixture of vapour would let him, for the captain of the chamber, who was judiciously absent. Then the suppers, when they could be got, and the closely packed set of boys seated on the beds round the fireplace. . . . Surely for ever this orbit of the memory holds sacred one beefsteak, which, plate on knee, was just beginning to disappear, when a malicious squib came straight at it; up went the plate; to lose the steak was not to be thought of: up went the supporting legs; a squib in the lap was also beyond a thought, and what was to be done? Too broad a surface still remained exposed to fire, the heroic sufferer held to his steak, the squib burnt out, and he resumed his seat slowly, victorious, though not unscathed, and solaced the wounds which no breastplate covered with mouthfuls of homœopathic beef. Shall song be silent of that Decius who slipped down the stairs on his back with his messmate's and his own pot of beer in his hand, and

did not spill it, sternly upholding his steady hands in spite of each successive stair touchingly appealing to his bones? The endless tide of adventures comes streaming up as those days are recalled, days full of incident that rival anything in Tom Brown's experiences and the pleasant histories of his graphic pen. And all the time side by side with this went on the oppidan house life on the whole in a satisfactory, humanising, effective way. This wild college life was certainly a very different type from the sneak-as-you-please, but never-wet-your-feet existence of the private school, and it was the better of the two, for freedom is better than slavery; but, alas! for the waste and ruin in the future, the wretchedness, and coarseness, and idleness at the time which it brought on the majority of those cast into its whirl. It was not training, for training does not mean some boys turning out well in spite of disadvantages, a bit more than farming means the growth of grass and corn in spite of not draining and bad ploughing.

Again in a paper published in 1862 he says:—

A mob of boys cannot be educated. Not five-and-twenty years ago, with open gates up to eight o'clock at night all the year round, and sentinels set the winter through, as regularly as in the trenches before Sebastopol, to warn us of the coming master, the boys of the finest foundation in the world starved their way up to the university. Whistle or hiss marked the approach of friend or foe. Rough and ready was the life they led. Cruel, at times, the suffering and wrong; wild the profligacy. For after eight o'clock at night no prying eye came near till the following morning; no one lived in the same building; cries of joy or pain were equally unheard; and, excepting a code of laws of their own, there was no help or redress for any one. Many can recollect this.

In a note from his most intimate Eton friend—the late Bishop Mackarness—there is a reference to the same subject:—

I will not pretend—out of my less generous nature—to pour forth the same hearty enthusiasm which comes from your perennial fountain. But I may say, without hypocrisy, that I

do heartily sympathise with you in your untiring efforts to raise the business of education into a loftier sphere, and in your wish to banish the meaner elements of the work, as we have known it at Eton. Recollections of "My Dame's," and of "Jacob's Ladder," etc., and of various episodes in the daily life there, do not recall the nobler side of boyish character and feeling! I trust that things are better now.

A friend and contemporary of Thring has furnished some reminiscences which threw further light on the life in college at that time. He says:—

I remember he messed, that is to say, breakfasted, in private lodgings used by day, with a King's scholar like himself in honesty, muscular strength, and high-minded peaceful courage, John F. Mackarness (late Bishop of Oxford), then President of the Eton Society. . . . This privacy was a set-off against the noise and squalor of the "chambers" in which the college made us spend the winter evenings. In the chambers it was not easy even for a Thring or a Mackarness to read or write studiously. Once a year the eldest boys had to write a sort of compilation called an "Essay," and they began it in the last week. To secure silent hours they waited till the others were in bed; half of them wrote by the fireside for the first half of the sleeping time, and then called the other half. I state this to show how unfit our dormitories were for students. But there were three recesses in a tower, of which two were dangerously damp; there were also about eight wooden cupboards with space for a writing-shelf, a seat, and a book-shelf or two. These, like the three recesses, were called studies; students who could bear cold sat in them on winter evenings, locking out all uninvited boys. We sometimes paid rent to schoolfellows who had by seniority a right to these cells, and who were not studious.

Then besides the studies we had by day the rooms in lodging-houses,[1] where we breakfasted, washed ourselves, kept

[1] In Thring's Diary occurs this entry, written twenty-five years after leaving Eton: "Sent £5 to-day to Mrs. Joel, where I had rooms at Eton. I hope she is alive. She was a good woman and kind. I should like to give her a little pleasure."

our clothes and books, and received our visitors. These were real sanctuaries, known to exist, but never invaded by our teachers, much less by the Provost and fellows of our college. In the inviolability of these rooms we had a great advantage over the oppidans or non-foundationers. When not interrupted by the stupid class-lessons which we had to sit through about fifteen half hours a week, we could spend our day there in tranquil study and unobserved enjoyment of literature.

The contempt here expressed for the ordinary class-work of the school, which was all upon which the collegers had to depend for instruction, seems fully justified, not only for them, but for the mass of Eton pupils. Wretched as were the appliances for giving the collegers a wholesome and comfortable school life, the provisions for giving instruction throughout the school, if we omit the private work to which reference has been made, were even more inadequate. When Dr. Keate became headmaster he found himself in sole charge of a class of 170 boys, and later the number increased to at least 200. This intolerable state of affairs led to some attempt at reform, but even then the headmaster was left in charge of 100 boys. We learn that in 1833, the year after Thring entered, there were only 9 masters to 570 boys in the Upper School. Manifestly no pretence even could be made of giving adequate individual training to the boys. Private work could not remedy a defect so great, except for a very few, and a tutor who was at all popular and successful was as much paralysed by numbers in the pupil room as in the public schoolroom. Classes so large that a boy could only reckon on being called up to construe two or three times during the half could scarcely seem otherwise than stupid. As a matter of fact, while the clever and willing had opportunities to learn, while the efforts of

private tutors sent up pupils to the universities to win the highest distinctions, numbers of the careless and weaker boys were left to shift for themselves, without any serious effort being made to give them training.

It has seemed necessary to outline at some length the conditions under which the lad's school years were spent, since they undoubtedly gave direction to the whole future career of the man. It was his own experiences as a boy which kindled in him that desire to make schools better, which finally became the one aim of his life. Already at Eton the leaven was beginning to work. A school-fellow writes:—"I remember once hearing him talk against a particular point in the Eton system in a way that made me think that, though industrious and ambitious, he was still very independent in his ideas of education."

A few slight personal touches of his Eton life we have, more or less suggestive of characteristics which were to show themselves in the man.

One story comes from his old school friend Witts, afterwards a fellow-worker at Uppingham. The spaces between the buttresses of the school chapel at Eton were used as fives courts; indeed, from them the game is said to have had its origin, and the courts commonly in use their form. Thring, a very small fellow, had one day gained in the usual way, by early occupation, the right to use one of these courts. A big and bullying senior ordered him to give it up, and tried to enforce the order by the usual methods of schoolboy coercion. But threats, kicks and blows could extort nothing save "I'll die first" from the lad, who had thrown himself on the flags, and in defence of his rights refused to move. The incident seems to have been public enough to impress the minds of the boys, and

the cognomen of "Little Die First" is said to have clung to him for several years.

Rev. Charles T. Hoskins, who for some time shared his rooms at Joel's, mentions that "at fives he would almost invariably choose the sharer of his room to 'take off' any other two on the 'four-wall,' however good they might be; and so inspiriting was his resolute manner of playing that even his companion played the better for it, and he was seldom beaten." And another Eton contemporary, who has already been quoted, writes:—

"There was a game, then peculiar to Eton, played with one ball by two or four boys on flagged slopes between the buttresses of the chapel. In deference to ancestral arithmetic it was named after the two sets of fingers 'Fives.' Thring was a capital fives player, and this, I think, did much for his health both at school and afterward at college. I remember he used to make a good fight on the fives court with the captain of the cricket club, who had more reach. . . . His pluck and muscle were peerless." These reminiscences will interest many an old Uppingham boy who remembers how the headmaster and his friend Witts year after year challenged the school champions at fives, and till near the age of fifty were never beaten.

At cricket and football, in both of which he afterwards freely joined with his boys at Uppingham, he played a vigorous game, though not with such striking skill as at fives. His delight in athletics continued throughout life, and for more than a quarter of a century his Diary, among all its records of more serious matters, rarely fails to mention the chief features of every athletic contest that occurred in the school.

One of Thring's most intimate Eton friends describes him as a boy overflowing with fun and mischief. Another says:—"The epithet which I would apply to him is 'sturdy'—sturdy in build, in mind, in principle, in fidelity, in antagonism to all that was wrong and false." A third notes:—"I remember that as an upper boy he was in the habit of going, when school hours permitted, to an evening service at Windsor (very unusual for boys) with the late Bishop of Oxford. He bore a high character for integrity and honesty."

Some sides of the free life which he lived at Eton always appealed strongly to Thring's individual character. In his later life there was a current opinion that his aspiration was to make Uppingham an "Eton without Eton's faults," but he himself denied having consciously had such a thought in his mind. Love for the place and antagonism to the system as he had known it may be taken as his permanent after-feeling about his old school. When, during his Uppingham career, the headmastership became vacant, and a leading London journal had put forward his name as a suitable person for the post, the comment in his Diary is: "Were such an offer possible I could not accept it. I could not cure what I believe to be the evils of the Eton system, and I could not work on what I believe to be false lines."

After spending nine years at Eton Thring's career at the school closed with an event very memorable in the life of a boy. As senior colleger and captain of the school he became captain of Montem in that year, the last occasion but one on which this once famous Eton festival, now become a vague tradition, was celebrated.

In one form or another the institution of Montem is believed to have existed at Eton from the early days of Queen Elizabeth, probably having its origin in the ancient custom of electing and installing a boy bishop. Celebrated at first yearly and later biennially, it became during the last seventy years of its existence a triennial festival, and gradually developed into a great social function, and probably the most gorgeous spectacle which has ever been seen in connection with school life.

The Sovereign, when in residence at Windsor, was usually present with other members of the Royal family; ministers of State came down from London; parents and friends of the Eton boys attended from a distance; the equipages of the country gentry far and wide around Eton increased the throng, and added to the brilliancy of the spectacle. At Thring's Montem in 1841 the newly-opened railway to Slough made it possible for great crowds of outsiders to reach Windsor, and add themselves to the mob of local sight-seers. The newspaper reports of the time mention the arrival of numerous London trains bringing as many as a thousand visitors each.

The materials for gathering a clear idea of what the great Eton festival was like are probably more complete in the case of Thring's Montem than of any other. The presence of the newly-married Queen and the Prince Consort, who then saw the festival for the first time, led to the proceedings being very fully reported in the local and metropolitan journals of that date. Two pictures, painted at the time by Evans to represent the chief figures among the boys who took part in it, are now in the possession of Lord Braybrooke. Both of these have been engraved,

and are probably well known to old Etonians. A very graphic description of the festival, chiefly based on Thring's Montem, is given in *Blackwood* for September 1891, by the Rev. G. C. Green, who took part in the Montems of 1841 and 1844. Among Thring's papers is a complete collection of his Montem bills, showing all the receipts and expenditures in connection with it, and a letter from his mother to a relative, giving a pleasant description of the day's events. This full information makes it possible to sketch with some accuracy the main features of this great school function.

Mr. Green, after describing Thring's Montem as "probably the gayest and most magnificent that had ever been seen," says :—

> The spectacle itself was such a gorgeous one, and it was associated with so many old memories and associations of the past, that all old Etonians throughout the country, and all the friends and relatives of Etonians from far and near, strove to be present on that day, and curiosity drew immense numbers besides, who were perfect strangers, so that a greater crowd assembled at Eton on that day than has probably ever assembled there since its discontinuance, and every single person who was present was asked to contribute something, large or small, according to his means, and all the money so collected was given to the lucky boy who happened to hold the proud position of captain of Montem.

The captaincy of Montem was decided as follows :— Each year at the July "election trials," as they were called, the boys who had passed their eighteenth birthday were placed in order of merit, the first on the list being captain of the school. Whenever vacancies occurred among the seventy members of King's College, the news was brought at once to Eton, when the head boy was required to proceed

to Cambridge. Twenty days' grace was allowed him to make preparations for leaving school. "If the grace should happen to expire on the very eve of Montem day, the right of being captain would lapse to the colleger who was next on the list, so that the twentieth day before Whitsun-Tuesday in that year was a very critical day for those two boys, the captain and second colleger at that time. Till midnight it could not be known for certain who would be captain. We called that night 'Montem-sure Night.' We sat up late in our long dormitory, called Long Chamber. Just before midnight the ends of all those heavy wooden bedsteads were raised high in the air, the large wooden shutters were held by ready hands, and then, as the last stroke of midnight sounded from the clock tower, the shutters were slammed to, the bedsteads let fall on the floor with a thundering sound that could be heard in Windsor Castle, and 'Montem sure!' was shouted with all the power and energy that the excited young watchers could exert. The right of being captain was now vested absolutely in the senior colleger, and preparations for the event could go on uninterruptedly."

These preparations undoubtedly interfered sadly with the work of the summer half, and offered many temptations to extravagance and drunkenness. The gorgeous dresses used on Montem day had to be ordered and fitted; the captain was bound by custom to entertain his chief supporters at preliminary breakfasts and "tasting dinners" at Salt Hill. The boys themselves had to practise their parts; and the expected inroad of visitors with its attendant excitements made serious work difficult or impossible.

The nominal object of Montem was to make a collection of money to be given to the captain to assist him in his university career. This collection on Montem day was entrusted to two "salt-bearers" and twelve "runners," who, splendidly attired in fancy costumes, and usually protected by armed attendants, were stationed with their collection bags at various points: in Eton itself, at Maidenhead Bridge, Windsor Bridge, Datchet Bridge, Colnebrook, Iver, Gerard's Cross, Slough, and Salt Hill. Here they levied toll on all passers-by, giving in return to the contributors the Montem ticket, with its justifying inscription, *Mos pro lege.* Meanwhile the procession of the boys marching in military dress and array to Salt Hill (*ad Montem*) was the picturesque feature of the day's proceedings. With a royal bodyguard of regular troops drawn up and military bands playing, the boys marched around the school yard, under the eyes of the royal and other distinguished visitors who looked down upon them from the Provost's Lodge. "A long line we formed," says Mr. Green, "as may be easily imagined, being over 600 strong. So we streamed out into the Slough road on our march for Salt Hill. The procession was swelled all along its route by the thousands of visitors from all parts of England, on horseback, on foot, in every kind of conveyance, ladies in their gayest dresses, all combining to make such a picture as will never be seen again."

At Thring's Montem the crowd was greater than had ever been known before. His brother Henry,[1] who had come down from Cambridge to be present at Montem, mentions a circumstance which illustrates the density of the throng. At the entrance to the

[1] Now Lord Thring.

inn at Salt Hill the crush in the procession was so great that he became anxious for Edward's safety. On pointing out the danger to one of the soldiers on duty the tall grenadier leaned over, lifted the lad from the throng, and passed him on to comrades over the heads of the crowd till he was in a place of safety.

The festivities among the boys began more than a fortnight before Montem day. Bills for large breakfast parties at the White Hart Inn appear as early as May 14th, and continue at intervals, while confectioners and cooks seem to have been busy supplying the captain's table at his own lodgings.

For Montem day itself W. Atkins sends in accounts for :—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 160 gentlemen at breakfast at 6s. 3d. | £50 | 0 | 0 |
| 330 do.—dinner at 6s. 6d. . . | 107 | 5 | 0 |
| 60 polemen at 5s. . . . . | 15 | 0 | 0 |

These charges only include the solid portions of the two chief banquets of the day. Botham, the landlord of the Windmill Inn, sends in a supplementary account. Some of the items must have furnished weighty arguments for the abolition of Montem. I select a few :—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 84 bottles port—5 returned . . | £23 | 14 | 0 |
| 84 sherry—16 returned . . . | 20 | 8 | 0 |
| 72 cider—30 returned . . . | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| 48 do.—steward's order . . . | 4 | 10 | 0 |
| 48 porter . . . . . | 2 | 8 | 0 |
| 96 champagne—14 returned . . | 35 | 17 | 6 |
| 36 claret—10 returned . . . | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| Lemon juice . . . . . | 0 | 18 | 0 |
| Sugar . . . . . | 0 | 18 | 0 |
| Lemon and nutmegs . . . | 0 | 7 | 0 |
| 2 bottles brandy . . . . | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 barrel ale . . . . . | 1 | 16 | 0 |

The captain entertained his principal supporters among the boys at special tables, and for these there are separate bills—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 20 dinners | (captain) . . . | £16 | 19 0 |
| 32 do. | (salt-bearers) . . . | 24 | 15 0 |
| 12 do. | (runners) . . . | 8 | 13 0 |

The additional wine bill for these latter tables includes 69 bottles of champagne, 13 of claret, 9 of hock, 11 of sherry, 3 of port, and 12 of cider, at a cost of £50 : 16s., or an average of more than 15s. per boy for wine. After this it is not surprising to find the accounts closing with pretty large charges for broken glass.

When dinner was over it was a custom for the boys to adjourn to the gardens of the inn, and there use the swords they carried in hacking the currant and gooseberry bushes, or decapitating the cabbages and other vegetables. A bill for damages of this kind seems to have been a regular item in the Montem charges, but none is found among Thring's accounts, and one of the journals of the time mentions that on this occasion the landlord of the inn recouped his losses by charging an admission fee to the grounds. This was paid by great numbers of people in order to watch the boys at their work of destruction.

£43 : 12s. was paid to the band of the Life Guards; £31 to that of the 60th Rifles.

The two hired attendants of the captain, Atkins and Goodchild, must have been gorgeously arrayed in their suits of blue and gold at £5 : 12s. each, "superfine beavers" at a guinea, silk hose 12s., gilt buckles £1 : 10s., and so on.

These charges are sufficient to show the extravagant expenditure which marked the festival. The authorities

seem to have felt powerless in attempting to check the expense and the extortion of tradesmen.

In enclosing to Thring's father Montem bills to the amount of £640 : 12 : 11, the headmaster, Dr. Hawtrey, says :—

The whole of the bills are now paid. There remains only the sums usually given to the runners and salt-bearers and the £50 which made the bargain between your son and Gouge.[1] These sums being fixed payments, and not entering into the bills over which any control can be exercised, I have left to you and him to settle.

It is provoking to find more could not have been done to lessen the expenses; but I believe it to have been impossible. Mr. Botham's bill seems to me exorbitant, but he has tickets to produce, and I do not see, therefore, how it can be disputed. Still after all the extortion of the day, and the large indispensable expenses, there still remains a sum which will be a valuable addition to the next three or four years' college life. With every good wish to your son, and a most sincere testimony to his successful exertions and irreproachable character, I am, etc.

On Montem evening the head-master reports that after a counting which occupied two hours, the bags of the salt-bearers had been found to contain—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| In cheques | £106 | 3 | 0 |
| In notes | 265 | 0 | 0 |
| In sovereigns and guineas | 396 | 1 | 0 |
| In half-sovereigns | 165 | 10 | 0 |
| In crowns and half-crowns | 132 | 15 | 0 |
| In shillings | 135 | 17 | 0 |
| In sixpences | 43 | 10 | 0 |
| In fourpences | 4 | 16 | 0 |
| | £1249 | 12 | 0 |

[1] This fixed payment is explained as follows :—Since the captaincy was undecided between the first and second boys in college until twenty days before Montem day, it was the custom for these lads to mutually agree that whichever was captain should pay the other £50.

A sum of £19:15:6 received later raised the whole collection to £1269:7:6. At the three previous Montems in 1832, 1835, and 1838, it had been respectively £873:0:0, £1006:14:0, and £1186:13:0. Large as the sum was in 1841, it appears to have been below the anticipations formed from the multitude of visitors present. Dr. Hawtrey writes, in announcing it: "I am sorry to say that the sum collected appears to fall surprisingly short of the amount which was imagined. . . . However mortifying this result may be after such an account as we had heard, still the collection must be considered a good one."

Mrs. Thring, who had driven up with her husband and a large family party from Somerset to attend the festival of which her son was the chief figure, writes the following account of the day's proceedings to a relative:—

My DEAR MADAM—The *Morning Post* which I sent you on Saturday as soon as I returned would give you a much better account than I can possibly do of the grand features of the Montem, still we think that you would like to hear our proceedings, which Gale desired me to give you. The business of the day begins very early, for before I was dressed at half-past seven, I was called to look at one of the salt-bearers come to the lodging for his "salt," as the money is termed—a very handsome youth (the captain of the oppidans, a son of Mr. Piggott of Brockley Combe), dressed in a most splendid Spanish dress with hat and feathers. The captain of the collegers, the hero of the day, Edward, wears only a captain's uniform with a star on his breast to distinguish him, and he really did not look absurd, though so little. We went at nine o'clock to breakfast with Mr. Goodford, one of the masters, who, as such, has the power of admitting his party to the school yard, which cannot otherwise be obtained without a ticket from the headmaster. We then were taken to the College Hall, and soon after entered about 200 of the youths, all dressed either in fancy costumes or in scarlet, to breakfast,

whilst a military band played and the whole area was filled with genteel people. Through Mr. Henry Woodhouse's introduction, we next got admission into the Provost's Lodge, and were in the first row of a line in a room through which the Queen and her suite passed, so that we saw her fully and closely. The Prince Albert is a gentlemanly, good-looking man, with a pleasing, but rather melancholy expression. After the Queen had passed we returned into the school yard, and had a front view of her from the open window bowing to the boys, who paraded before her, cheering her most vociferously to the extent of their power. This done the procession of Etonians moved in rank and file to the mound at Salt Hill, and we got into our carriage and went up the road. The Queen passed us in her carriage quite close, and we arrived in time to witness the waving of the flag at the top of the mound by the boy ensign, and the renewed cheering the Queen. All the youths then went to the dinner given by the captain to the whole school, and as many private friends as he chooses to invite, and during their banquet the company adjourned to the gardens of the inn, where the band continued to play, and where you have again a well-dressed *mob.* We then returned to our lodgings, where we had ready for ourselves and friends abundance of cold chicken pie, etc., and from that time till eleven at night we had a constant succession either of visitors or boys to enjoy it. We took a turn, however, in the evening into the beautiful playing fields of the college, which are in themselves worth seeing, independently of the multitude of well-dressed ladies and beautiful fancy dresses of the boys. In the evening we saw these last to perfection, as between twenty and thirty came into our lodgings to supper at different times. The day was delightful for the purpose, and the collection the best ever made—upwards of £1250; the expenses are enormous,—I believe £800. But still Edward is a lucky fellow, as he is now gone off to King's College, Cambridge, as a scholar, and goes on regularly to be fellow in course of time. It was a source of great gratification to us to find that he had not only secured the approbation of those in authority, but was likewise extremely popular with the juniors. We have, indeed, abundant cause for thankfulness, and are, I hope truly grateful for the blessings conferred upon

us. . . . We all separated next day — Theresa, Gale, and Theodore for town—Miss Hood, daughter of Sir Alexander Hood, whom we had taken with us, returned with me to Alford — Miss Thring to Clifton — Henry and Edward to Cambridge. . . . Henry was very anxious that we should have gone to the installation at Cambridge, but that is now postponed in consequence of the intended dissolution of Parliament, which will find employment enough for many of the visitors. . . .

I enclose one of the copies of the Montem Ode,[1] written by a friend of Edward's, according to custom, in which

[1] Any account of Montem would be incomplete which omitted mention of the doggerel verse here referred to as the Montem Ode. It was supposed to be the composition of a person (quite fictitious) styled the "Montem Poet." The ode was printed at the captain's expense, and distributed during the day, as a broad sheet ballad, by a man usually dressed in character, to whom the sale was a somewhat valuable perquisite. Thring's Ode was written by a friend of his own class, his lieutenant for the day. A few lines will be sufficient to illustrate its character :—

Step out, strut well, before such great spectators;
Show off, smart lower boys, before your "maters,"
You cock your chins up pretty well, but still
You'd all of you be better for a drill;
Though legs be cased in duck, and toes in boots,
Our regiment is full of raw recruits;
Eyes right—though sisters giggle, "Don't you see, John,
How you kick up the dust?" though Gov'nors wink,
Threatening to draft you to the Spanish legion
Unless you make your mark. But, pray, don't think
That I would such aspersions fling
Upon our stately, portly Captain Thring,
That stern Caucasian chief, who rears
Behind six files of mountaineers
His proud, majestic figure;
His well-bedizened retinue
Almost, alas! obstruct the view;
However well they be attired,
Perhaps it were to be desired
Their lord were rather bigger;
But yet his purse—we hope—we know—
Will beat in length his person,
And ladies can't expect each beau
To stalk as tall as Curzon:
So drink his health and praise his feast,
And, when the holiday has ceased,
Say, one and all, with grateful heart,
Thring has played well the captain's part.

he has remarked pleasantly enough on Edward's littleness. Will you please return it, as it is the only one I have.

Obviously Montem was a celebration which was likely to put a severe strain upon the character of a captain. One of Thring's old school and college friends writes :—

Edward Thring was the last but one of those who had the luck to be captains of Eton, or eldest of the foundation scholars when the triennial festival called Montem was held. I have known three others . . . all of whom suffered morally from being supplied with the inordinate credit given by innkeepers and shopkeepers to Montem captains, recipients of many hundreds of pounds collected as toll rather than free gift, and squandered on parasites or drink. He alone in my time escaped the evil effects of the absurd institution. He went through the summer school term as a schoolboy and the subsequent three years at Cambridge in perfect sobriety and purity. This did not strike me at the time; it was a matter of course. . . . But afterwards when I learned why Dr. Hawtrey abolished Montem, I began to see the danger from which Thring's very strong character had preserved him.

The magnificence and extravagance of Thring's Montem, and the increasing popularity of the festival, which, in Dr. Hawtrey's words, made Eton on Montem day little better than Greenwich Fair, practically sealed its fate. After an ineffectual effort in 1844 to mitigate its worst evils, the authorities of the college decreed its suppression.

We have now followed Thring through his school-days. From the time when he went, at eight years of age, to Ilminster, to the period when, at nineteen, he left Eton as head of the collegers, and Captain of Montem, he had certainly tried the heights and depths of schoolboy life. His varied experience had left on his mind a profound impression, the results of which were to be developed in his subsequent career.

# CHAPTER III

## COLLEGE AND CURATE LIFE

### 1841-1853

MONTEM was celebrated, according to ancient custom, on Whit-Tuesday, which in 1841 fell upon June 12th. A week before, on June 5th, Thring had been formally enrolled as a scholar on the foundation of King's College, Cambridge, and he entered upon residence in October of the same year. Three years later, on June 5th, 1844, he became, in the regular course of succession, a fellow of King's. Altogether he was in residence at Cambridge as scholar and fellow for six years.

Of the undergraduate portion of his college career there is little record, save what is furnished by the college lists and by occasional references in his Diary and letters of later years. His private classical tutor at Cambridge was George Kennedy.

Under the system which prevailed at King's, Thring took his degree without university examination, and so could not be placed in any tripos. His tutor expressed the opinion that the place of first classic of his year at Cambridge would have lain between Thring and one other competitor.[1]

[1] In 1844 he obtained one of the highest distinctions of the University,

Writing in 1875 to an old pupil, Rev. A. H. Boucher, of his undergraduate life, he says :—

I think you were better off in your set than I was when I first came up. Nevertheless, on the whole, looking back at the time, I spent a very quiet, powerful three years at Cambridge, and can now think of it as one of the best periods of my life. In the turmoil of work afterwards the hours which had no other care but how to make the best of one's self in literary training come back with a very peaceful flavour.

And again :—

I never enjoyed any time more in my life than the two Longs I read at Cambridge. There is something particularly fascinating, so I thought, in the quiet, uninterrupted reading and perfect mastery over one's time. Some of my strolls about midnight in King's, in the summer night just before going to bed after work, still live in my memory; so also do some of my walks.

He continued in residence three years after taking his degree and obtaining his fellowship.

These years of Cambridge life he described, in one of his public addresses, as "now heavy with labour, now buoyant with hope, bringing great searchings of heart, and much balancing of right and wrong, much anxious weighing of the value of education and life, and their true use."

A pregnant sentence, which he speaks of as a prayer, remains to tell us one main drift of his thought at this

the Porson Prize (for Greek iambics). He mentioned to a friend that for this prize he made sixteen distinct translations of the passage set (*Second Part of King Henry IV.* Act IV. Scene vi. 93-117) before deciding upon the final form his composition should take. His college prizes were—Glynn Prize in 1842 (awarded for learning and regularity of conduct); Latin Declamation in 1842, 1843, and 1844; Classics and Divinity in the annual examination, 1842 and 1843; Cooke Prize, 1844 (awarded "to those scholars who have deserved well by application to their studies and general orderly behaviour").

time—of the dream and ideal of his own future which was forming in his mind: "Work till the end of my life, and life till the end of my work."

This was the prayer, written out at Cambridge and preserved, into which the "searchings of heart," of which he speaks, became crystallised. Never, surely, was prayer in both its alternatives more amply fulfilled.

A junior at Eton, who had followed him to college at an interval of some years, says of him at this time:—

When I came up to Cambridge he had nearly finished his course of reading. He had improved his scholarship by very determined hard work, the more creditable as his succession to a fellowship was a mere matter of course. . . . He was very enthusiastic over his classics, and had a high standard of morality and industry. I remember his telling me that an upright, steady character was in itself a silent rebuke of vice. He was rather out of spirits when I first saw him at King's, as he had been working exceedingly hard without much encouragement or reward (King's men did not then go in for the tripos), but almost directly he was cheered by gaining the Porson prize, much valued by scholars. But what seemed to me to cheer him most of all was when he made up his mind to be a clergyman. He was active and athletic, an extremely good "fives" player, full of energy in everything he undertook. I was rather afraid of him while I admired him.

At Cambridge he was already beginning to be recognised outside of his immediate college circle as a man of exceptional ability and force of character. Writing to him in 1868, Alexander Macmillan says:—

It is very nearly a quarter of a century since I first knew you, and since my dear brother and I used to speculate on the line in which you were to become eminent, for you were among

the first of Cambridge men whom his clear eye determined as fitted to do world work in one line or another.

Within the college the reforming instincts which were afterwards to carry him so far had already led him to take an active part in a struggle of much importance which was then going on.

Reference has been made to the anomaly which had long existed at Eton, whereby scholars were sent on from that school to college at King's, and to the enjoyment of valuable scholarships there, not by any special test of merit, but merely on the ground of seniority. The conditions on which King's College itself at that time carried on its work presented an anomaly even more extraordinary. By an agreement, dating from about the middle of the fifteenth century, between the university and the College, King's claimed for its scholars the privilege of exemption from the university examination for degrees. The only test submitted to by the men was one that satisfied their own college-tutors, who then presented them as a matter of right for the university degree. Hence the names of King's men never appeared in the class lists, and they were thus excluded entirely from the greatest object of university ambition at Cambridge, a high place among the wranglers of the year. Competition for a limited number of university scholarships or prizes was the only path to university distinction which offered itself, and for this naturally only a few of the ablest men would enter. The result was that the great majority of King's men took their degrees and passed on to the enjoyment of college fellowships without having undergone any university test.

Thring recognised clearly the temptations to idleness and the limitation to ambition thus imposed upon

King's men. While yet a fellow of the college, he threw himself with great heartiness into the agitation to do away with this system, and wrote two vigorous pamphlets upon the subject; the first in 1846, the second in 1848. New College, at Oxford, had lately abandoned a like privilege, and had sent its scholars into the schools in the ordinary way. Eton, too, had begun to reform its practice. "The College of Eton," he says, "has lately introduced a complete reform with regard to the succession to King's; for whereas formerly the boys came up at random, the oldest, like cattle waiting to be fed, standing in the first rank—now the trials which decide their order are no longer a dead letter, as some have found to their cost; but the most meritorious in a constant stream come up to Cambridge, in some cases only to stagnate there." The action of New College he quotes as an example for imitation; the change at Eton as a guarantee, from the better class of men sent up, that King's need not fear the test of the university examinations. The true value of examinations is touched upon. "The College," he says, "has rejected that fair and open university trial, which, working on the sense of honour in the good, and the sense of shame in the bad, infuses vitality into the mass on which tutors and lecturers are to act. . . . If the men are men of ability, they are (if left without examination) pent up in an unnatural stagnation; if the contrary, they hold their station by an equally unnatural tenure." He dwells upon the duty of taking away all temptations to idleness in great foundations like King's, which he describes as "charities without the sense of dependence; men hold them as their own, yet as having a service to render for them; that which they have received they are to pass on undiminished, if not in-

creased; the dead have hired them for a wage to serve the living." An objection put forward by the opponents of any change was that as Eton and King's were strongholds of classical learning, their men would be at a disadvantage in an examination which required a certain amount of mathematical knowledge. On this point Thring writes to his mother in 1849:—

I had a letter from King's yesterday, saying that they are going to make a great effort to separate the Classical and Mathematical Tripos, so that a person will not have to go in for mathematical honours before he can try for classical. I don't know when it will come on, but I shall go up and vote for it from any place and at any time. King's will be regularly stumped if the measure passes, their last excuse for idleness entirely cut away from them, to the great delight of many of us.

The arguments pressed by Thring and others were so completely successful, that when the question finally came up for decision in 1851,[1] the vote of the Provost and fellows of King's was unanimous for relinquishing the anomalous privilege of their society. To the great and admitted benefit of their college, King's men have since that time submitted to the usual university tests.

[1] On 1st May 1851 the Vice-Chancellor writes to the Provost of King's:—

"I beg to acknowledge the receipt of the document from your society, by which you relinquish, for yourselves and your successors, the ancient and acknowledged privilege in accordance with which the undergraduate fellows of King's College have been accustomed to claim and to receive the degree of Bachelor in Arts without having undergone the examinations prescribed by the University for the undergraduates of all other colleges. It will be my duty to inform the Senate of the important decision of your society, and I doubt not but that the University at large will duly appreciate the public spirit and high principle by which yourself and the fellows of King's College have been actuated."

He was ordained deacon in 1846, and priest in 1847. Soon after the first of these dates he accepted a curacy at St. James's Church, in the city of Gloucester. His vicar, Mr. Hedley, who died in 1855 at a comparatively early age, was a man of exceptional power and character. Thring often said that no other man had ever exercised so much influence over his thought. It was during this period at Gloucester that the intense religious convictions, the vivid conceptions of personal relations to God, and the consecration of all his powers to God's service, which afterwards became the ruling motives of his life, seem to have become definitely formed and fixed. Writing to Mr. Hedley's daughter in 1871, after he had been eighteen years at Uppingham, he says:—

> I can assure you no epoch of my life has made half the impression on me that my Gloucester stay and your dear father did. He of course was my great star, though I loved your mother too, but he was the most single-minded Christian I ever met, and wise and intellectual withal. He stamped himself deep on me; much of my life here is indebted to him, how much I cannot tell. Night and day he is present in my prayers. I often think of him still, and love to look on this work as part his. You know partly what a great work I have been blessed to do here. Even outwardly it is very great, but in spirit I trust better still—a deep, true, unseen laying of foundations of better education.

Two letters from Mr. Hedley to Thring—one on his appointment to Uppingham, the other on his marriage, remain to throw light upon the relations between the two men, upon the nature of that influence over his life to which Thring so often alluded. They are the letters of a man who lived only for the things of the spirit; who valued success and happiness for his friend

only as they enlarged the sphere and willingness for Christian service; who welcomed failure and suffering for himself and others, so that they drew the heart nearer to God. They explain and fully justify the reverent affection which Thring entertained for the writer.

Of Thring's directly religious work at Gloucester little can now be gleaned. It is interesting, however, to note that in later life at Uppingham he looked upon a clergyman's work in a parish as an excellent preparation for the duties of a schoolmaster. In appointing masters he frequently took this into consideration, giving the preference to men who had parish experience, or advising young men from the universities to get it before entering upon teaching duties. It gave, he thought, knowledge of the human heart and experience in dealing with various dispositions. "It keeps the heart open, and so makes the head sound," he writes to an old boy who was still at Cambridge. And again, to his Cambridge friend, Luard, he says:—

I am rejoiced to hear of your approaching ordination. Be sure my heartfelt prayers shall go up for you both now and then. I think you will find yourself much happier if you get in a good parish, and many a theoretical difficulty gets quite disposed of in good work by God's blessing, as one learns to see how in all times these (difficulties) have been much the same, and how little the practical object of evangelising a lost world has to do with the speculations which in the study appear all-engrossing. At least so it was to me, endeavouring to fix my heart steadfastly without personal feeling on what would promote or injure my work or usefulness.

But it was here at Gloucester, in the National Schools, that he began to teach, and in later life he

always looked back upon this period as the very pivot upon which turned all his later educational work and thought.

Speaking of his career as a teacher in his inaugural address to the Education Society, of which he was chosen President in 1886, he said :—

But the curate life was the foundation of it all in practice. Never shall I forget it, with its teaching work, almost daily, in National Schools. Everything I most value of teaching thought, and teaching practice, and teaching experience, came from that. Never shall I forget those schools in the suburbs of Gloucester, and their little class-room, with its solemn problem, no more difficult one in the world: how on earth the Cambridge honour man, with his success and his brain-world, was to get at the minds of those little labourers' sons, with their unfurnished heads, and no time to give.

They had to be got at, or—I had failed.

They tried all my patience, called every power into play, and visited me with much searchings of heart if they did not do well. Never shall I cease to be grateful to those impracticable, other-world boys, and that world of theirs which had to be got into. . . .

There I learnt the great secret of St. Augustine's golden key, which, though it be of gold, is useless unless it fits the wards of the lock. And I found the wards I had to fit, the wards of my lock which had to be opened, the minds of those little street boys, very queer and tortuous affairs; and I had to set about cutting and chipping myself in every way to try and make myself into the wooden key, which should have the one merit of a key, however common it might look, the merit of fitting the lock, and unlocking the minds, and opening the shut chambers of the heart.

Oh! how hard it was to get into shape, their shape, and fit the twists and corners of blocked and ignorant minds. But it was glorious work. There was wonderful freshness in those schools, a most exhilarating sense of life touching life, of freedom and reality, after the heaps of knowledge, which,

like sheaves of corn on a threatening day, had had to be loaded up and carted in against time at school and college.

That the lowest teaching work requires the highest teaching skill is a truth which Thring was never tired of affirming. It was one he had learned from experience. He writes in 1883 to a teacher chiefly interested in elementary schools :—

> I learnt my teaching in the National Schools in the parish of St. James, in the suburbs of Gloucester, where I was curate and used to take a class. In fact, the whole of my English Grammar up to moods is simply a verbatim sketch of the lessons given in that class, in which I questioned all the ordinary grammar in and out of the little boys without their looking at a book, as any competent teacher can do in the same way. You may guess from this how thoroughly I agree with you in your aims.

It was not only in teaching the children of the National Schools that Thring's educational experience was being enlarged during the period of his life as a resident fellow at college and as a curate. His College appointed him one of the "posers" at Eton for four successive years—1850, 1851, 1852, and 1853. The University sent him as an examiner to Rugby. At Cambridge, in 1850, he was examiner for the classical tripos. After leaving Gloucester he read with private pupils for two years. Thus he was probing English teaching in various directions, and gaining an experience of schools and teaching methods which extended all the way from the top to the bottom of the educational scale.

He had thrown himself into the work of his curacy at Gloucester with the same vehemence of effort which characterised his later life. The strain proved too great, and a breakdown in his general health, the

influence of which extended far into his school life, combined with serious throat weakness, made it necessary to take a year or more of entire rest. This enforced cessation of parish duties was at the time a bitter disappointment and trial. The work for which he had prayed was denied him. Unconsciously to himself the preparation for it was still going on.

I have before me a note descriptive of his life at Great Marlow, whither, after a short stay at Alford, he went to make a temporary home after leaving Gloucester. It is written by one who then met him for the first time, became deeply interested in his character and career, and ever after remained a fast friend. The picture given of his energetic methods of taking relaxation is eminently characteristic. He devoted himself to his garden, made himself especially an expert at budding roses, and was full of eagerness to give instruction in this art to any one who was inclined to learn. "From his garden the cultivation of roses spread over the neighbourhood, and the effect on cottage gardens was very noticeable."

The love of dogs and other animals he derived from his youth at Alford, and the taste clung to him throughout life. "At Great Marlow his educational powers were exercised upon his dogs with surprising effect, and his patient training resulted in feats of intelligent obedience which interested and delighted his friends."

But what struck them most was the energy with which he devoted himself to the happiness of those around him. He would walk, ride, row, or do anything which contributed to their enjoyment; he made their interests his own; nothing seemed *small* to him. "Much self-control and training must have gone before to make him what he was in those early days," says

this friend. "Manliness and courage are perhaps the two most prominent qualities with which one's mind recalls him, with unselfishness and steadfastness in his friendships. Probably it never occurred to anyone who knew him to doubt him, or to think that he could change." When a sympathetic listener was found, he talked with such entire unreserve and with such intensity of earnestness of his hopes and plans, that many who knew him then were quite prepared for what he afterwards accomplished in his chosen career.

At Great Marlow he spent in all two years, living in what he describes as "a small pretty house, called Seymour Court." Some private reading with pupils was taken as his health began to improve, and on most Sundays he helped his friend, Mr. Powell, vicar of the neighbouring parish of Bisham, in preaching or in the other services of his Church. In 1851 he removed to Cookham Dene, a short distance away, in order to take the curacy of the small district of Stubbings, lately cut off from Bisham and Cookham Dene. Here he remained two years longer. The Vicar of Bisham remembers that at Stubbings he took the same great interest in the parish schools that he did at Gloucester.

It was during this period of partial disablement that he wrote his first work on English Grammar.

Meanwhile, both during his college career and later, he had been supplementing his work and studies by the education of foreign travel, on which he seems to have spent a portion of the money which he received as captain of Montem. In letters written to his mother vivid sketches remain of tours taken with his brothers or friends: one through Brittany and up the Loire; another up the Rhine to Switzerland, and through the more important parts of Germany; a third to Italy,

where he spent several months in 1852. On this last occasion he had started from England with the intention of going from Italy to the Holy Land. But during the months that he spent at Rome he met the lady who was to be his future wife, became engaged, and under this new impulse, with characteristic impetuosity, changed all his plans, and returning to England, bent his thought entirely on getting work in the sphere to which his mind had been so long directed.

His friends wished him to take a mastership at Eton. The proposal for his appointment seems to have been made in his absence, and it was opposed by some of those high in authority at his old school, who took exception to his "manner." Of this Eton criticism Thring writes from Rome to his friend Luard at Cambridge: "I wish most sincerely that my manner was much softer always, still I feel sure it has been positive rather than aggressive." Whether this distinction is correct or not, one scarcely wonders that an educational iconoclast, who had very strong convictions on school reform, and who never hesitated to express them, should have seemed a doubtful acquisition to many of the Eton men of that day. It is not clear that Thring himself ever seriously entertained the idea of going to Eton. When the offer was at length made to him it was declined, much to the disappointment of his father. Thring was manifestly anxious for an independent field of action.

Before going abroad in 1852 he had applied for the principalship of the Diocesan Training College for masters in the diocese of Oxford. On his return he thought for a time of a preparatory school for small boys. He applied for the mastership of the school at Durham, then vacant.

To Durham, in his new eagerness for employment, he went in person to press his application. He writes thence to Mr. Luard :—

I am here seeing canons, and trying for the school. I think I have a reasonable chance for it. My visits to the canons are by no means unsatisfactory, as if they are nothing else they are very pleasant people to talk to, and I can put my case quietly, and remove any little obstacles.

His name was one of two reserved from the list of applicants for the second day's scrutiny. On so slight a thread hung for that day the fortunes of the little Midland school which he was to lift to eminence. The decision of the Durham Governors was in favour of Mr. Holden, then headmaster of Uppingham, who received the appointment. Thring at once applied for the post thus vacated, and after a short period of anxious waiting, was notified of his election.

He announces his appointment in a hurried letter to Cambridge on 1st September 1853, and nine days later he entered upon his work.

Before the end of the year, on 20th December, he was married to C. Marie Louise Koch, daughter of Karl Johann Koch, of His Prussian Majesty's Customs, Bonn on the Rhine. Thring aimed at creating a home life as well as a school life for his boys, and he was wont to attribute much of the character and success of Uppingham School to the ladies who shared the work of the masters. In his own household the loving sympathy and devotion brought into his life by his marriage, and the help of a powerful mind trained with German thoroughness to high educational ideals, were everything to him through the years of trial which he had to face. Many years afterwards he writes to an intimate friend, on his marriage :—"I can only say I

have found my marriage the most perfect earthly blessing, beyond my lover's hopes even, and worth all. I trust you will too. The 'help meet for him.' There is the spell of happiness."

His marriage involved the resignation of his fellowship at King's. He writes to the Provost on 19th December :—

As to-morrow morning, before this letter is posted, I hope to be married, I beg to send in my resignation as fellow of King's College. On a review of the past, as I feel the strongest affection for the royal places of my education, so I trust, as far as my powers went, they will acquit me of having failed them wilfully.

A sense of duty as well as affection kept up his interest in King's. Thirty years after the date of his resignation, in 1883, this note occurs in his Diary :—

Asked to preach at King's on the 27th. I do not like going to preach, but I have no choice. I have eaten King Henry's bread, and my services must be given whenever required, if it can be done.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE BUILDING OF UPPINGHAM

### 1853-1859

THRING entered upon his headmastership of Uppingham school on 10th September 1853, when he was in the thirty-second year of his age.

A few days before, a friend had met him as he was returning from taking his first look at the place. To some casual question about his journey his reply was, "I think I have found my life-work to-day." That reply furnishes a keynote to his after career, and the explanation of his feeling in taking the appointment. Not as a stepping-stone to something else, but as a sole purpose in life, did he enter upon the work of a schoolmaster. Not as a post to be held till something better offered, but as a field for a life-long educational experiment, already clearly outlined in his mind, did he go to Uppingham. Thenceforward till the close of his life, thirty-four years later, that place was to be the centre of all his thought and effort. There he was to find the amplest realisation of the prayer into which at college he had concentrated his dream of life.

The field of work which he aimed at creating for himself — a great public school — is the best that

England offers for effective educational experiment and striking educational result. A few such schools have held a conspicuous place in English history, and have had immense influence on English life. It is not too much to say that, under powerful impulses, a great public school may, even in a generation, have a very perceptible influence in moulding the national character. Through it is constantly passing a stream of several hundreds of boys, who come from the better homes of the country, and go on to the universities and to professional life—to prominent positions at the Bar, in the Army, the Church, the Civil Service, the teaching profession, the higher organisations of commerce and industry. To influence public school life is therefore to modify the highest social and intellectual forces of the country. Such schools are expensive, and therefore limited in number; the reaction of one upon another is great, even when least admitted; and so to make a new and great public school on new principles could not fail to have a far-reaching effect. It is admitted that a school of this class, as it exists in England, offers the sphere in teaching life where individuality of character and vigour of policy in the teacher have the best opportunity of making themselves decisively felt. In the vast organised systems of education with which we are familiar in modern times, the individual teacher finds his efforts hedged in on all sides by official prescription of work and method. For his personal initiative little room is left. It is the just pride of the great English public schools that in them a headmaster is usually left comparatively free, save where tradition becomes his master, to do his work in his own way. It need scarcely be said that this fact places a premium on strong men as headmasters, and also

makes the positions tolerable to men of force and originality.

One circumstance especially gives a unique interest to the building of Uppingham. It was the realisation of a preconceived and carefully thought out plan based on definite educational principles. I once asked Thring whether the structural and other ideas of the place had grown upon him as he advanced in his work. "No," he said emphatically, "among my papers I can show you the sketch, almost in detail, of everything I proposed to do, and which you now see here, just as I made it in the very first years of my mastership." The ideas which he had gleaned from his experience as a small boy at Ilminster, as oppidan and colleger at Eton, and as a student and fellow at Cambridge; from his later work as a poser at Eton, as examiner at Rugby and Cambridge, or from his training in the National Schools at Gloucester, had all, in the years before he went to Uppingham, been wrought out into definite form, and he began his work there with a fixed conception of what was necessary to be done—of the ideal school which he intended to create.

Let us glance for a moment at the surroundings of the place where his life-work was to be done, and the conditions under which it was begun.

Uppingham is a Midland market town, the centre of an agricultural district in Rutland, the smallest of English counties. The name indicates its elevated situation—500 feet above the level of the sea—a circumstance to which it owes a bracing, healthful air. To the south the high ground sinks away with undulations to the valley of the sluggish Welland, which winds like a thread through its broad meadows in summer, or covers them with wide lakes of quiet

water when the spring or autumn floods are out. In other directions, highways, pleasant to ramble along, lead through the ordinary Midland scenery, beautiful, but somewhat monotonous.

Beyond the school population, which comes with the opening terms, and for the most part flits—masters with their families as well as boys—in holiday time, the inhabitants do not number more than 2000. A sleepy little place it is when the school is away. Almost the only ripple in the local life is on market days, when the small square fills up with fat sheep and cattle, and the inns with sturdy farmers, butchers, or dealers. Railways approach on all sides, but did not, in Thring's time, reach it. The nearest stations—Manton, Gretton, and Seaton—were all four or five miles away,—an isolation inconvenient for the visitor in a hurry, but not without distinct advantage in the government of a large school.

The straggling principal street is picturesque in its way. The church boasts the pulpit from which Jeremy Taylor preached when he was the incumbent of the parish. Beyond this and apart from the school there is little of ancient historical tradition to dignify the little town, or give to boys' imaginations the impulse which schools like Eton or Winchester may well draw from their surroundings.

Take away from Uppingham as it is to-day the noble chapel and great schoolroom; the ivy-covered schoolhouses which lie along the High Street; the other handsome structures which, embowered in shrubbery and surrounded by gardens, are situated at intervals along the Rockingham and Stockerton roads; the baths, the sunny playing fields, the gymnasium, the cottage hospital fronting on Fairfield;

the waterworks, which speak so eloquently to the initiated of sanitation and well-flushed sewers, of a terrible danger and a great deliverance; and we are able to realise what the little Midland town looked like when Thring first came to it in 1853, to enter almost single-handed upon his educational work. A picturesque but antiquated master's house, and an Elizabethan schoolroom, neither picturesque nor adapted to school needs, made up the existing school machinery. A part of this house, now used as a library, and the old schoolroom, transformed into a studio, still remain to remind Uppingham of its day of small things. A single assistant on the foundation, an under-master, and an "inefficient writing instructor," constituted his working staff. In some letter or paper he mentions that on first visiting Uppingham he "saw possibilities in the place." May we not think that the "possibilities" which he saw lay not so much in the place as in something reflected upon it from within the man himself?

And yet Uppingham was an ancient school. No one delighted more than Thring in dwelling upon the fact that there he had found a point from which to start; that the school was no mere trade venture, but that he had built upon foundations long since laid by a good man as a deed of large-minded charity and love. Through all his after work this thought runs like a golden thread of inspiration. As far back as 1584 Robert Johnson, Archdeacon of Leicester, had, "by God's grace," to use the first words of the old statutes, founded at Uppingham a "faire, free grammar school." To it was attached a hospital for the maintenance of a number of poor men and women. A like school and hospital were at the same time founded at the neighbouring town of Oakham, to be

controlled by the same Trust or governing body. The founder mentions in the statutes that he has "in the said towns purchased certain lands, and also built certain houses for the habitations of my schoolmasters and wardens, ushers and sub-wardens, and poor men and women, and have also purchased divers hereditaments, revenues, and tenements, of the late Queen Elizabeth of famous memory, for the maintenance of my said schoolmasters, ushers, poor men, and certain poor scholars." To control the Trust thus constituted the archdeacon directed that there should be a Board of governors, of which his "right heir male" was to be hereditary "patron."[1]

He appointed to be members of the Board the Bishops of London and Peterborough, the Deans of Westminster and Peterborough, the Archdeacon of Northampton, and the Masters of Trinity and St. John's Colleges, Cambridge, with their successors in office from time to time. It does not appear, however, that these were expected to take any active share in the government of the Trust, as provision is made for their voting by written proxies only in the case of the election of headmaster.

The direct control was left almost entirely with the local governors, who were chosen, to complete the full number of twenty-four, under the following regulation of the statutes:—"When a place of governorship which is not successive falleth void, the governors then living shall choose either a knight, esquire, or gentleman, well known and reputed of by them who dwell in the

[1] This provision of the founder's statutes was not interfered with when the new scheme came into operation under the direction of the Charity Commissioners in 1875, and A. C. Johnson, Esq., the then patron, continued to fill the place. At the tercentenary celebration in 1884, the hereditary patron was present and took the chair.

diocese of Peterborough, or some minister whom they know to be a learned or pious man, a Master of Arts at least, and a parson or vicar within the diocese of Peterborough, in Rutland, or of my schoolmasters of Oakham and Uppingham." It will be observed that, with the exception of the *ex-officio* members, the governors were an entirely self-elected body.

The archdeacon appears to have himself preferred clergymen as governors, since his original nominations were all the incumbents of neighbouring parishes, together with his two schoolmasters (probably also clergymen) and two of his own grandchildren, "Isaac Johnson, Esq., and Samuel Johnson, Gentleman." The two latter were apparently the only laymen upon the Board.

In later times the list of governors was largely made up from the country gentlemen and noblemen of the diocese.

For 270 years the school thus founded and governed had kept on the even tenor of its way as a small county grammar school. Among its pupils were a few men who rose to prominence. The endowment, which produced, when Thring took the school in 1853, about £1000 per annum, furnished a small stipend (£150) to the headmaster; another (£130) to his principal assistant, and kept the schoolroom in repair, but it was chiefly devoted to the payment of scholars' exhibitions to the universities, and in this way, no doubt, the charity of the founder did much good in assisting struggling students to a university career. A portion of the fund was still given to the almsmen provided for under the Trust.

One more fact in connection with the composition of the Trust must be recalled in order to understand the difficulty of Thring's position. Archdeacon Johnson had provided for the joint government by the same

Board of his two schools at Oakham and Uppingham. These places are only six miles apart. The schools were intended to cover the same range of work, each taking boys of all ages and preparing them, if required, for the universities. Under such circumstances they naturally came into rivalry. In the centuries during which the Trust had been in operation the very moderate fortunes of the two schools had alternately fluctuated. It had become proverbial in the county that when one was up the other was down. With a Board drawn about equally from the neighbourhood of the two localities, nothing was more natural than that the squires and clergymen of each should watch jealously that no special preference was given to the other.

Nor was this all. A purely agricultural community, dominated by a few large landowners—country squires and conservative noblemen—scarcely furnishes a soil in which we expect new and progressive ideas to rapidly and easily take root. Of the country clergy on the Board, with their keener interest in things intellectual, something more in the way of hearty support might have been expected.

None of these, however, seems in earlier days to have had much weight in the counsels of the Trust, save one, who was Rector of Uppingham and Chancellor of the diocese of Peterborough. There is reason to think that the Chancellor, who was a man of intellect, was also of an ambition which led him to look with distinct antagonism on the growth beside him of a great school power which threatened to overshadow his own parochial influence.

It was a strange chance which brought it about that an enthusiast like Thring, burning with a zeal which had been gathering strength for years, his

imagination filled with a large plan for the bettering of education, his iron will bent on its accomplishment —ready to risk credit, health, life itself to gain his ends—should have to enter upon his work under a governing body of this kind, which, far from entering with sympathy into his views, looked for years with suspicion and distrust upon every forward step, and even offered passive, if not active, resistance to the working out of his ideas. The evidence that this was for a long time the attitude of a majority of the members seems complete.

Against the inertia of this body Thring's passionate earnestness and restless energy never ceased to chafe. While he felt that he was staking his life and fortunes for a great and holy cause, they thought and not seldom said that he was gambling with the money that he and others had invested in the school.

Again, had he possessed a considerable fortune to expend upon his experiment, or had he had at his disposal large sums of money, such as have been given for the foundation of many modern schools, the attempt to which he from the first inwardly pledged himself would seem less audacious than it now appears to us. But all these conditions were wanting. He was a younger son, and could only look forward to deriving from the family estate the small portion of a younger son,[1]

[1] Thring always held, however, that the benefits derived from the law of primogeniture outweighed its disadvantages. "Much of the best work of England," he once said to me, "has been done by the younger sons of good families because they were younger sons. To us (speaking of his own family) it proved an almost unmixed good. After our school and college life we younger brothers were thrown out upon the world to win our own way. Education and instinct alike pledged us to use every effort to maintain the credit of the family and the old home. That home, meanwhile, was being kept together as a centre of the family life, and to it we could all return from time to time. In influences such as this lies one of the secrets of England's achievements."

upon, which, meanwhile, as long as his father lived, he had no claim. His family, indeed, had little sympathy with his ideas, and scant faith in the enterprise upon which he was entering.

It was under these circumstances that Thring, practically single-handed, undertook and carried out the work of establishing a great public school. In doing so he had to enter the lists against the old and rich foundations, like Eton and Winchester, Harrow and Shrewsbury, with their centuries of tradition and long-established connection. At about the same time more than one foundation was being started, backed by munificent gifts of money or powerful social influence.

Only a few miles distant from Uppingham was Rugby, then at the height of its reputation, and with the memory of its greatest headmaster still fresh around it.

Against such competition he could only match an intense conviction that in fundamental particulars public school life had nowhere yet in England been established on any system educationally true in principle, and so capable of general application by average workers under average conditions. It was to framing such a system and securing for it recognition that he consecrated his life. So far as ambition entered his thoughts it was to leave behind some "constructive memorial" of his conceptions of educational truth.

"A school," he writes in 1859, "may enshrine the individual in their hearts, but it ought to have a monument of him in his system. There are times when a man must build his ship as well as be able to command her. It may dazzle men more to watch a great man's success under adverse circumstances, but it benefits society more to have a good

strong system set on foot which any average honest man can work."

He wished to establish a school based on true principles. But in his mind these principles themselves rested upon and grew out of what can only be described as a passionate conviction that education was, in a special sense, a work for God. No one can gauge Edward Thring's work and character unless he understands the supreme influence of this belief on his life. From the time when he came to Uppingham a young and perhaps over-confident enthusiast, through years of work and weariness, of mingled success and disappointment, to the day thirty-four years later when, suddenly stricken, he turned away a dying man from the altar of his noble chapel with the words of the communion service upon his lips, this thought that he was doing a work for God, and under His immediate eye, never forsook him. In every crisis of an anxious life it was the central and sustaining thought which gave new courage. It was marked by the fixed habit of always devoting a moment to private prayer before leaving his study to go to his first morning class. It shone out in the morning Scripture lessons to his sixth form, recalled by many a pupil as memorable in the awakening they gave to higher views of Christian life. It appears on every page of the Diary, written almost daily for well-nigh thirty years of his school career. Here every note of true work accomplished, every step in school progress has, in Greek, or Latin, or English, its brief ascription of praise to God, as to every beginning of work he gave its dedication of prayer. Not only did the thought run through his school sermons, as might have been expected, but it also gave a solemn earnestness to his ordinary talk on school questions.

This feeling, indeed, that in training young lives he was doing a special and direct work for God dominated his own life and all his views of school life. It gave him his starting-point for practical work.

"Thring was the most Christian man of this generation," was a remark made to me in the House of Commons soon after his death by a well-known public man. One was curious to know the genesis of a thought that seemed to savour of exaggeration. "Because," he went on to explain, "he was the first man in England to assert openly that in the economy of God's world a dull boy had as much right to have his power, such as it is, fully trained as a boy of talent, and that no school did honest work which did not recognise this truth as the basis of its working arrangements." This was in effect the essential element in his school beliefs. It is the best starting-point for any discussion of the ends he had in view.

Two extracts will serve to illustrate his position in theory and practice. The first is from a paper written at an early stage of his school career:—

> Englishmen say they are fond of facts. . . . Here is a fact of the greatest importance: Englishmen of the upper classes send away their children from home to be educated by strangers.. No theory which does not distinctly recognise this fact to begin with is of any value in England. No practice which does not thoroughly and fairly meet this fact ought to find acceptance from the practical English mind. Children leave home to go to school. In theory they are sent to a place which is better than home, to be under men who train better than fathers and mothers. This is a large demand. . . . A place better than home; there is much in this—men better than father and mother as trainers; there is much in this. Of course one obvious "better" is at once seen. The children require lessons and skilled teaching, and

few homes can give this. But whole nations—Germany, for instance—bring skilled teaching within reach of all homes. The English school in all instances started in early days as a local school, and has been pushed out of this by the judgment of the English people. . . . This teaching want, therefore, clearly can have little to do with the present fact. England has not chosen to have its education carried on at home, but deliberately prefers, when it can be had, a boarding-school. Accordingly the mere teaching . . . does not satisfy the better-than-home claim. For the teaching might be had and the home kept. . . . The difference between merely teaching, and teaching and training, is simply immeasurable. The introduction of the training element at once makes a different world. This different world, if it is truly adapted to its purpose, demands, indeed, to begin with, everything that the other does, with the addition of everything necessary to provide for the whole life of every boy in and out of doors on the best training principles. It will simplify every school question to get rid at once of the idea that the actual teaching and knowledge part of the matter is the main thing from the English point of view. . . . The decision has been made and is a fact. The wealthy English neither bring teaching to their houses which they might do, nor go into the towns for it which they might do, nor found schools on this plan which they might do. . . . As a fact beyond dispute, Englishmen of the upper classes send their children from home, and *the reason why they are sent from home* is not the teaching. . . . This at once brings us to the necessary conditions of a boarding-school as a place of training. It must be better than home. But every boy comes from a home, and a thousand families do not want, if they understand their wants, 10 per cent of their 1000 boys to be turned out brilliant knowledge caskets and prize-winners, while 90 per cent take their chance. The class list does not satisfy the training demand for each boy at all. . . . Every boy who leaves home ought to go to a better than home place. . . . It is an absolute necessity in training, a self-evident truth, that every boy, whatever his abilities may be, should be intelligently cared for and feel that he is so cared for.

Again, in a statement made to the trustees of the school in 1875, when his theories had been thoroughly worked out in practice, and had been crowned with success, he says :—

> The two main facts on which the present school has been built up are very simple and easily stated.
>
> They are these two truths: Firstly, the necessity in a true school that every boy, be he clever or stupid, must have proper individual attention paid to him. If he has not, the boy who has not, so far as he is neglected, is not at school. Secondly, that proper machinery for work, proper tools of all sorts, are at least as necessary in making a boy take a given shape, as in making a deal box.
>
> Out of these two axioms the present school of Uppingham has grown by a necessary process of reasoning and practical business.

Let it be said at once that these two truths, if accepted as axiomatic and fundamental, meant revolution in all the well-known schools of Thring's time. When understood they are seen to fix the ideal towards which schools have since been slowly moving under the compulsion of public opinion without or reforming energy within, but which even now comparatively few have reached. They furnish, it may fairly be claimed, the ideal towards which further movement in structure and organisation should be directed.

The facts with which his school experience had made him familiar will best illustrate the lines of his reforming work. The conditions which prevailed at Eton have already been referred to. The barrack life of the Long Chamber, with its seventy or eighty boys left practically without supervision or the possibility of comfortable life, was no doubt its worst feature in the matter of residence; and the headmaster's classes of 200, which reformation had only reduced to 100,

the worst in point of teaching. But the ordinary houses for oppidan residence had numbers so unwieldy, the class-rooms and tutor-rooms were so crowded, that due attention to each boy was a practical impossibility, and was scarcely attempted. If we turn from the extreme case of Eton to the school where reform was then believed to have done its utmost the facts are still such as to arrest attention. We are told that in the headmaster's house at Rugby there were between sixty and seventy boys.

Of the class-rooms during about the same period we have the following account by the late Dr. C. H. Pearson in the *Contemporary Review* for August 1893:—

> I remember three forms at Rugby that averaged sixty pupils to the master, and these forms came one above the other in the school course, and took the boys in the important years between twelve and fifteen. Naturally the masters, who were conscientious men, were grievously overworked, but the finances of the school did not allow of their numbers being supplemented.

Thring believed that conditions such as these made truth in school training impossible, and that out of them inevitably grew what he regarded as perhaps the greatest heresy against educational truth ever expressed, viz. that "the first, second, and third duty of a schoolmaster is to get rid of unpromising subjects." Not that he doubted the sincerity and the good intention of any master of a public school who took this view. But to leave in a system structural defects which compelled neglect, made individual care of all boys in the house and individual training in the schoolroom impossible for even the ablest and most conscientious teachers, and then by dismissal to get rid of the failures

created by such impossible conditions, seemed to him a flagrant defiance of justice and common sense. Bad conditions might make the policy of dismissal a temporary necessity, but statesmanship in school life would aim primarily at changing the bad conditions to good.

To the argument mentioned by Dr. Pearson, that able men can even now be adequately paid at the great schools only when class-rooms are overcrowded and boarding-houses large, his answer was ready. Either parents should pay fees sufficient to provide for the training of each boy, or they should be frankly warned that the school could not undertake to give it. Truth, he said, cannot be taught to boys where truth is not the practice of the school. But he himself firmly believed that schools could exist which make justice and a fair chance for each boy the very corner stone of their system. To prove this in practice was the task to which he addressed himself.

After the ordinary system of country grammar schools of its class, when Thring came to Uppingham, the headmaster alone was allowed to take boarders. One common and obvious method by which an able and energetic man could hope to draw large pecuniary advantage from a position of the kind, was to retain this boarding monopoly, enlarge his house as the number of pupils increased under vigorous administration, and employ unmarried and more or less temporary masters, who can always be obtained at low salaries, to share the teaching work. Very large incomes have been made and are now being made by headmasters out of schools managed in this way. But it was repugnant to every educational principle that Thring had in his mind. He had conceived a system which

he believed to be the only one on which perfectly true and honest public school education could be carried on, and he was bent on creating a great school which should serve as a permanent illustration of certain clearly-defined principles.

The main features of this system can be easily stated. In the first place, there was to be no barrack life, with its barrack discipline and the lack of individual care which were the necessary result of excessive numbers congregated in a single house. Much observation and thought upon the point had led him to conclude that about thirty boys were all that could be adequately dealt with in one house. This original opinion was ratified by many years of practical experience, and to the end of his life he saw no reason to change this maximum. With thirty boys, a master and his wife were not over-matched by numbers, could make their houses home-like, and could know intimately and therefore influence the individual boy. The care of the individual was thus secured, but another immediate and important result of this limitation of the numbers permitted in a house, is that it secures for the school the largest possible proportion of masters who are not birds of passage, but having homes in the school are permanently interested in its success, and have the strongest inducements to make teaching a fixed profession.

This point he deemed fundamental.

"The first great distinction," he said, in a statement made to the governors in 1859, "between a first-class and second-class school is this, whether there exists a permanent staff of masters or not; this is the test of the class to which a school belongs; without this, no other advantage can lift a school into first-class rank.

"These masters ought, also, to have incomes dependent on their own exertions, and not to be paid fixed salaries.

"The number of boys apportioned to each master must not exceed his ability to teach—that is, pay individual attention to, not simply deal with in classes. Every boy must feel himself known if either affection, truth, honour, or intellect, or intellectual progress are to have fair play."

Next to the number of boys, therefore, who can be efficiently cared for and managed in a house comes the question of how many can be efficiently taught in a class. On this point his view was equally definite. He held that in a great public school, doing the classical and other work which prepares for the university, from twenty to twenty-five boys were all that could be taught in a single class if adequate attention were to be given to each.

Nor should a class fall much below this limit, since competition and the interest of numbers are necessary to the greatest efficiency. It need scarcely be said that this judgment, new in practice and hardly ventured upon even in theory in his time, has now the endorsement of all teachers of weight.

The settlement of the numbers which could be adequately taught in a class led him on by a natural process of reasoning to a further important conclusion.

He held that the limit of numbers in a first-rate public school training boys for the university could be almost as rigidly determined, if sound principles were adhered to, as the limit of numbers in a house. Ten or eleven houses with thirty boys apiece constituted the maximum beyond which it was not wise to go; any considerable drop beneath this number was also at the expense of efficiency. With this maximum of boys, a staff of house masters, strengthened by additional

masters for special subjects, could deal. A sufficient number of classes could be arranged to secure easy upward movement in the school for the number of years during which boys usually remain. No class was too large to interfere with individual training, while each was large enough to give the necessary stimulus of competition. The moment that a school rose above this number the classes became overweighted, and the work proportionally inefficient up to the point where the staff could be doubled, and a system of parallel classes established from the top to the bottom of the school. But against a school thus doubled or trebled in size the objections were fatal. The following statement, made in reply to a request for an opinion as to the comparative working efficiency of a school with 500 boys and one with 1000, will show his point of view on this last question :—

It is certain that a school which undertakes to work each boy cannot be in a true state of efficiency if its numbers exceed 400 boys, and for the highest average excellence that is too much.

The numbers that a headmaster can know personally form no slight item of calculation in a question of efficiency.

As long as the headmaster knows every boy he is headmaster; the moment he does not, the man who does is so far headmaster. The working of this is not unimportant. If a headmaster does not know each boy, and is unable to give an opinion on each boy, his assistant master B comes before him with a complaint of a boy C, whom he does not know. The headmaster has no choice; he must take B's opinion as final, and act on it. In other words, the headmaster sinks into the position of B's policeman; B is entirely independent of the headmaster in his treatment of boys, and knows it. This makes B an autocrat in his own class, and breaks up the school into a number of small sections. The effect of this is that as no unity is possible, the individual masters are in a great degree free from restraint; and great laxity of discipline

and great unevenness of treatment is the result. The boys cease to expect uniformity; the masters drop into slack habits, or are martinets, according to their disposition; charges of favouritism are rife, and punishments are set according to individual caprice. All real organisation is gone. I attribute in no small degree the efficiency of this school to the fact that no serious punishment is ever inflicted without consultation—the headmaster, house master, and class master always discussing the matter. Every master always works and acts with the consciousness that his whole system and the application of it to individual boys has to meet the judgment of the headmaster, and that the headmaster knows the boys that have to be dealt with, and that his colleagues are also often called in to give an opinion.

I consider these facts alone to be in practice fatal to the thorough efficiency of a too large school.

There is no hard and fast line, but each boy added to the numbers over about 330 or 340 begins to act as a drag. Whereas every boy added to the numbers up to about 330 adds to the efficiency of a school, by securing a sufficient graduation of classes and a sufficient number for the training of the outdoor life.

Therefore I need scarcely say that there is no choice, in my judgment, between two schools for 500 each and one for 1000. The two schools alone are worthy of the name of schools, and are alone capable of doing school work. . . . There are no principles more definite than the principles which determine that an efficient school must not pass certain boundaries in the matter of numbers.

In addition to the limitation put upon numbers in a single house, Thring found in the structure of the houses themselves means to combat the evils of the barrack system of schools of which he had seen so much in his own boyhood. In building his boarding-houses, he provided not only that each boy should have a separate cubicle in the dormitories, but also a small study, from which other boys were excluded

except by special permission, and which thus became a little castle of his own. The suggestion of the individual study Thring seems to have found in the picturesque old schoolhouse quadrangle, but with intuitive perception of strategic advantage, he seized the hint and developed it into a working principle. In these studies each lad had a refuge for quiet work or thought. Thus while each house gave its inmates a substitute for home life, the independent study gave a boy an opportunity for a degree of private life as well. Thring believed that this much could be secured for the individual boy without sacrificing any essential part of that hardy training in a large boy republic which is the distinctive mark of the English public schools, and which has been the great secret of their success in preparing men for the actual business of life. No man ever valued this public training more than he did; but he knew its dangers too. He knew that sensitive natures are often cowed or crushed by being left entirely at the mercy of a mob of thoughtless schoolfellows; that even for the strongest a certain degree of privacy has its moral and intellectual advantages.

Difficult as was the task before him of building, without means, and with but one boarding-house and an insufficient class-room to start from, Thring was at least happy in this, that he had no great structural mistakes of the past to get rid of. In noble architecture he delighted, but he never envied schools which possessed stately piles of buildings designed for architectural effect, but with no reference to the training of boys. He saw clearly how often able men's work was hampered by defects of external structure. The thought with which he began was that every brick put in place in a school, every plot of ground laid out,

should be so disposed as to assist in making it easy to do right and hard to do wrong. That structure should lend itself to the master's work, and not thwart it; that nothing should be left for men to do which could be done by machinery, he held to be essential.

"The almighty wall," was the terse phrase into which he condensed the thought that structure, over any long period of years, is a final arbiter of schools, by its steady pressure elevating or lowering the life within.

But to secure training for each boy other questions than the structure of houses, the limitation of numbers in the house, the class-room, or the school, must be considered. A great school has to deal with a wide variety of tastes and capacities. "Every boy can do something well," Thring used to say. A good school which aims at making the most of each boy should be prepared to give opportunities in many directions. A boy who cannot hold his own in purely literary work may command the respect of his fellows, and, what is even more important for healthy growth, may maintain his own self-respect on other lines of effort.

Games were a matter of course, and on them he laid great stress, aiming at as perfect an equipment as possible in cricket and football grounds and fives courts. It seems strange, in the light of present practice, to find that the gymnasium opened in 1859, and the gymnastic master put in charge of it, were the first possessed by any public school in England. A carpentry and a shop for metal work, each with skilled instructors, a garden where plots were assigned to pupils, and swimming baths, in default of any convenient natural bathing-place, were among the other appliances which, sooner or later, he adopted to carry out his general

idea of giving variety of interest or useful training in leisure hours.

On a higher level, and at the time more singular as an innovation, was his introduction of music as a regular part of public school training.

This must be spoken of at greater length in another place. But a fully employed staff of seven highly-trained music masters in the school to-day bears witness to the success of his experiment; the fact that the subject has a recognised place in the majority of the great schools shows the far-reaching influence of the example.

Thus far his plans looked mainly to the welfare of the unit in the school. But they had another aspect and direction.

The peculiar influence of the English public school in moulding character depends in no small degree on a singularly subtle, but also singularly powerful, sense of unity which gradually comes to pervade the school community. A long history and its traditions, common worship, common discipline in work and sport, the close contact which comes of common residence, similarity for the most part of social sympathies, common successes or failures in contests intellectual and athletic—all these seem to be factors in generating among the boys this strong sense of a united school spirit. To the strengthening of this feeling, with its silent but powerful compulsion on the character, mind, and manner of the individual, Thring attached the greatest importance. So while he planned the domestic and teaching machinery with a special view to the training of each boy, he knew well that a great school must have the appliances for collective treatment. Chief among these were a school chapel for common religious services, and a speech-room

or large school-room where the whole body could meet, and thus be made conscious of their common life, on public occasions. From the very first these large and expensive buildings were included in his plans.

From what has been said, it can now be understood what was the constructive work, to speak of brick and mortar alone, which Thring had outlined, not merely in his mind or in conversation with friends, but on paper, when he set himself the task of constructing a school which would satisfy what he conceived to be true principles of education. It has seemed best to make this clear first of all that the after struggle may be the better understood. After his end was gained there was a disposition to look upon the rise of Uppingham as something parallel with that of other schools, and to accept it as in the natural order of events. But the friends of those early days speak of the utter incredulity with which they heard Thring unfold his plans; of the surprise they felt when his splendid audacity, without a parallel, so far as I know, in the history of English public schools, began gradually to be crowned with success.

He himself, however, had as yet little idea of the long and painful path he would have to tread in working out his plans. "Yes, I have a work before me," he said to an old Eton friend a day or two after his appointment, "but you know, my dear fellow, self-confidence is not a deficiency in the Thring family." That self-confidence was to receive many a rude shock, but behind it were a pluck and persistent faith which gave it final justification.

He had been nearly five years at Uppingham, and had passed through the most severe crisis of his early struggles, when a friend, struck by what he saw at the

school, and impressed by the headmaster's plans for the future, suggested that some record ought to be made of a constructive work so important. Acting on this suggestion Thring began, as he says, "to put down some memorials of the events connected with this great educational experiment and its success, before I have forgotten the struggle and its bitterness, and from day to day to note down such circumstances as may be likely to be useful in time to come."

The brief retrospect of the first five years, with which the Diary begins, is the chief clue that remains to the events of this first period. He begins to note down his recollections in December 1858:—

On the 10th September 1853, I entered on my headmastership with the very appropriate initiation of a whole holiday and a cricket match, in which, I recollect, I got 15 by some good swinging hits, to the great delight of my few pupils. . . . The Trust had allowed the previous headmaster to vacate his post a month before. The school was in full operation, if a small rebellion deserves the name. . . . I found myself in an unfurnished house; my own bed, and a table and a few chairs literally the only things left; two boxes of books of my own were all the things I had time to bring. A set of troublesome servants, all of whom in the course of the year I dismissed. I was alone, not being yet married; very far from well . . . and thus without books, servants, or furniture, had at once to enter on a new school, and make a start. There were only twenty-five boys, mostly old, waiting for the exhibitions, my predecessor having taken to Durham eleven of the younger ones. And so the work began. There was one master, Mr. Earle, on the foundation here, and one salaried under-master —a very good fellow, but not up to his work—with an inefficient writing-master. I dragged through the dreary months as I best could till Christmas, changing the school work a little, and putting the domestic status of the boys on a better footing somewhat, but little could be done then. Two things, however, were very evident: that there never would be any good work

as long as the system of a headmaster unsupported was continued, and, secondly, that the foundation was worthy of better things. I determined at once, in my own heart, to begin the present work, to give up the exclusive right to boarders, to engage by degrees able men, to limit them and myself in number, so as to be able really to educate our pupils, and I felt confident that if the work was blessed there would be no want of numbers in time. I kept this to myself, as I should have been set down as mad if I had disclosed my real views, and I knew that nothing but this success could by any possibility remunerate me for the change. But my trust was in God and that it was His work. Alas! I was yet to find out that though theoretically I admitted this, yet practically I was too ready to worship my nets; believed that to get good men with high degrees would make a good school, and was in great danger of becoming self-confident and shallow in work.

During the first two years, though the growth of the school was very slow, he appointed three new masters, in each case personally guaranteeing a large part of their salary. But he soon found himself in difficulties which would have broken the courage of a weaker man. The appointment of a colleague, who had come to him highly recommended, and of whom he had hoped much, proved a bitter disappointment, and "brought everything to the brink of ruin"; entries fell off; the guarantees of salaries which he had undertaken fell upon him with crushing weight, and he began to be involved in debts which weighed him down for years. "Well did I learn," he says, "the lesson which he was sent to teach me—not to trust to human means. With many bitter tears, and weary days of pain of body and heart, almost in my heart's blood were the foundations of this school laid—almost out of my grave in that prolonged agony."

A statement made in 1857 of the debts he had

incurred for the school throws light upon this strength of language. They then amounted to £2680.

His intense earnestness, however, and his faith in the cause to which he had committed himself, soon began to kindle enthusiasm in other men. Foremost among these was the Rev. J. H. Hodgkinson, who was appointed to a mastership in 1855.

"I must record," Thring says, "my great obligations to Mr. Hodgkinson, without whose liberal, faithful efforts all would have perished. . . . At that time of difficulty and deep pecuniary embarrassment he threw his whole patrimony into the scale, set up a first-rate house . . . risked his all, in fact, in faith on the principles on which the work was set on foot, and by so doing prevented everything from collapsing, as it must have done."

Another man to whom Thring always expressed deep gratitude for his faith, sacrifice, and loyal help in this time of crisis was his old Eton friend, Rev. J. Baverstock, who joined him a little later. These two adhesions seem to have turned the tide of battle which was running against him, and gave him the courage to go on. A few years later, as will be seen, another old Eton and Cambridge friend, Rev. J. Witts, threw himself into the work with a courage and liberality which gave a great impulse to the growth of the school. The second master whom he found at the school, Rev. Wm. Earle, for some years hesitated to fall in with Thring's plans, and he records that "it was not until after Christmas, 1857, that I succeeded in gaining him over as a friend and fellow-worker." "One of the most pleasing circumstances that has occurred since my taking office," he remarks of this event. Thus he was drawing to his side the men who knew him best and recognised the spirit of his work.

For some time the growth of the school was slow. There were twenty-eight boarders at Christmas 1853; at Christmas 1854 there were forty-six. Already Thring felt a singular confidence in the ultimate success of his large plan, and one of his chief objects was to get the Trust to take some interest in the growth of the school.

He writes to General Johnson, the hereditary patron, in 1855:—

> I am sure, sir, from the fruits we are already reaping, that should it please God to bless us with health and strength a few years will make this school rank among the best of England. The numbers in the two years I have been here will probably more than double themselves, and by the system of first-rate and permanent under-masters taking boarders, there is a power of expansion to any desirable limit. . . . I confess to being desirous to obtain some tangible acknowledgment from the Trust of having been painful in my post, and of their interest in the progress of the work—some definite proof that may be a sort of Victoria Cross to us, if nothing more.

But the Trust had no such inclination. The chief obstacle lay in the relations of Oakham and Uppingham. Thring saw clearly that the two schools could not prosper side by side if doing the same kind of work, *i.e.* preparing pupils for the universities. He therefore proposed a plan by which this work should be reserved for Uppingham, while Oakham should be put on an efficient basis as a preparatory school. This plan was doubtless a good one, since it received the approval of the headmaster of Oakham, who joined with Thring in recommending it to the governors. So far, however, from accepting this proposal, the Trust seems to have spent a large sum in rebuilding at Oakham as an offset to the push which Uppingham

had received from private hands. The following letter from the patron, written in connection with this proposal, shows the nature of the local hostility which Thring had to confront:—

GENERAL JOHNSON TO REV. E. THRING.

1856.

If I understand your wish and intention rightly, it is to make Uppingham a first-class and more extended school, and Oakham a second or minor one. Now, my dear sir, suppose you to succeed in the first of these objects, which you appear to have every prospect of doing, you will never be able to obtain the governors' sanction to such a distinction. You are not aware of the very strong local feeling not only of the governors, but of the two towns of Oakham and Uppingham, and of the jealousy that has always existed between them. I do not think either the governors of the Trust or Charity Estate, or the inhabitants of the county at large, are very anxious for a further extension of either school than the locality so clearly defined by the statutes.

REV. E. THRING TO GENERAL JOHNSON.

*February 7th*, 1856.

I am, unhappily, only too well aware of the difficulty of moving any body of men not practically engaged or interested. For many years it was my lot to be occupied at King's College, Cambridge, in the endeavour which finally triumphed to put the statutes on a better working footing. The fact is, in these days, unless this is done, an external power which none of us will like will come and settle matters with a high hand, for the present practice is very wide from the statutes. However, as regards myself the case is quite different. No responsibility rests with me as it partially did at King's, and though I could not bear to see this noble foundation wasted and imperfect without laying the case before the proper authorities, having done so it is no duty of mine to agitate further unless encouraged to do so. The responsibility of the use or abuse of such high powers does not touch me, and I think it would

even be wrong in me to move beyond a certain point. But it certainly is my duty, as one of the two main workers of the Trust, not to withhold a working plan at this critical moment when such lasting interests are at stake. . . .

With respect to the money spent here which you so kindly mention, I can assure you it has been laid out on no hypothesis that the Board will give any help, though I shall not easily believe that the first gentlemen of this county take no intelligent interest in this great Charity, and the mere hearty support of such a body of men in the county would at once decide the question of success in our favour. What we have done is based on the necessities of a good school which is not preparatory. I boldly affirm, whatever appearances may be, that there cannot exist a school first-rate in its work excepting on the basis on which this is now established.

Immediately I was appointed headmaster here, I saw at once that this noble foundation had never been worked as it deserved. For the old system, under which the headmaster engrossed all the boarders, merely paying low salaries to a changing cycle of assistants, was manifestly an imposture, more or less, as the lower part of the school never could be properly educated, and also, as all depended on the headmaster, there could be no permanence, since the character of the school must vary according to its change of head *entirely*. I at once determined slowly to alter this. . . . I gave up all boarders, excepting thirty-two (there have been lately as many as fifty or sixty); sent to my friends at Cambridge; guaranteed £250 per annum to a first-rate man, handing over to him the rest of the boarders, with permission to take thirty. . . . I also engaged Herr Schafer at a guarantee of about £120 per annum as a German master, and on my numbers rising, have again engaged on the same terms Mr. Hodgkinson, an experienced teacher, for my lower classes. My guarantees therefore, including Mr. Clarke, and exclusive of Mr. Earle's salary, are not less than £670 per annum, some of which is perpetual, and all must return but slowly, besides the great negative loss of so many boarders. I trusted by these means, as time went on, to make the school worthy of its noble foundation, and when I had surrounded myself with a permanent staff of first-rate men and a flourishing school, that

the governors would not be unwilling to meet any proposals we might make, or the public to support us. I have said nothing of the sum of money I have spent in improving the school premises.

I think, sir, if you visited my buildings you would consider that I had been at no slight expense, and that the improvements were very great.

Coldness and opposition could not stop the growth of the school. The numbers increased rapidly under the impulse of the new spirit brought into the place. The governors, however, were still strangely indifferent to its progress. In 1858 the need for a school chapel had become pressing. In that year he writes to General Johnson :—

To General Johnson.

*Sunday night, August 22nd*, 1858.

This evening has brought before my eyes more strongly than ever the very urgent pressure we are suffering under from want of a chapel. . . . The hall to-night, crowded as it was, barely held us at all—boys and masters numbering 126, exclusive of day scholars, and more are coming at the quarter. . . . This week has been warm, and boys have fainted three times. . . . Really, sir, I am very sorry to trouble you, but this is no theory. If any governor will come over and be present, especially if the morning is warm, he will have evidence of a fact in this public school requiring to be dealt with at once. . . . All our private requirements both for boarding and tuition we have met and are meeting. We are furnishing even school-rooms whenever rented, but at this present moment we cannot build a chapel, or it would have been up by this time, without at least a guarantee from the Trust, and nevertheless we cannot conduct the school properly without one. Our Sunday worship (in the parish church) is a scandal. . . . The question is very pressing. If the chapel was begun to-day and carried on with all possible speed, I see clearly it would not be finished in time to prevent a temporary cessation of some of our most im-

portant work. When the history of the present rise and establishment of the school comes to be written, as it surely will be, if it lasts, these circumstances will scarcely be credited.

These first attempts to win the support of the Trust had little success. The gallery of the parish church had at first met the needs of the school for Sunday services. When that was outgrown the use of the church for separate morning and afternoon services for the school was obtained. Leave for this seems to have been granted somewhat unwillingly, and so the building of a school chapel became an urgent necessity. He thus describes his application for assistance to the governors :—

At the June audit (1858) I laid before the Trust plans for a chapel, as the school had outgrown the parish church, with a guarantee pinned to it of £500, signed by all the masters. The Trust left the plans and guarantee on the table, and gave no answer at all. . . . Yet the school was doubling itself in about two years. . . . At the Michaelmas audit I previously sent round to every governor a memorial stating our case plainly, so at last they were obliged to listen. I went there and was certainly treated with courtesy, and explained to them during three-quarters of an hour the system of the school, why it had risen and would continue to do so, and asked them simply to guarantee £1000, we having already done the same. —— opposed me with his usual narrow bigotry. First, with regard to the numbers: "What could we want a chapel for 400 for when we only had 200 as yet?" This he kept obstinately repeating as if it was impregnable wisdom, as a sort of charm, till I stopped him by saying that five years ago they would have thought me a madman had I told them of the present state of the school, and yet I could tell them that had I not, humanly speaking, been sure of the whole from the very first I would not have moved my little finger, and now the hardest half was done the rest would follow as a matter of

course. . . . Then he began about the money. I told him that when we had expended £10,000 already, and now guaranteed £1000, we thought it a very small thing for the whole power and resources of the Trust to meet it with a poor £1000 on their part. . . . They had a long discussion after I left, because General Johnson would not give up the effort to get justice done us, but finally refused our application with some complimentary varnish.

In this connection the patron writes to him :—

*October 20th*, 1858.

I am extremely sorry to find so little disposition in the governors to meet your very handsome and liberal offer respecting the building of a chapel for the school at Uppingham, and with regret signed the decree of which Mr. Day would send you a copy. . . . I am glad that I some time back told you not to rely on the liberality of the governors, who really appear to me quite as tenacious of the public money of the Trust as they can be of their own, and do not see long before them.

And again, in acknowledging a memorial to the governors :—

I wish you every success with it. But I would not have you raise your expectations too high upon it. I am not sure that the prosperity of the school is a first consideration with some of the governors.

The patron had also advised him not to stake too much in the school, or any hope of support from the governors.

To General Johnson.

*September 17th*, 1859.

I perfectly well recollect your telling me, when you went round our buildings, to have no dependence on aid from the Trust, and I am quite prepared to be on the same basis as Oakham in their eyes. But I am afraid now as then your friendly wish that we should desist from our work falls on

deaf ears. We regret nothing that we have done; so far from it, that we are determined gradually to carry out all these things ourselves if we can obtain no help. But even, if pecuniary support of the Trust was quite immaterial to us, I should still think it very wrong of me, with the convictions I have, to put them in so false a position as not to give them every information and every means of forming a judgment on a point which I feel sure will be the subject of so much attention. I had rather be thought presumptuous now, than that in time to come the Trust should turn round on me and accuse me of having brought obloquy on them and public censure or criticism without warning and without choice. Besides, in very truth, we want the active good-will of the Trust even more than funds. As long as the trustees as a body take no notice of us, so long will many people take their cue from them, and stand aloof and carp because the Trust stands aloof. If we can get a hearty decree for co-operation this audit, it will be of immense value to us, however slow the money may be in forthcoming.

TO THE SAME.

*December 5th*, 1859.

I say nothing of my own feelings after six years of such work as has been done here at the share taken in it by the first gentlemen of this and the adjoining county. But I feel sure of one thing, and I will speak plainly, believing that truth is the best. Things have now come to a pass here that make me, humanly speaking, perfectly confident of success. But grant we fail, we do not fail now without all England inquiring why, and learning why. Our friends are too powerful, our connection too wide for it to be otherwise. And when we succeed and, in the course of two or three years at the latest, appeal to the world to carry out our successful plans, I had fondly hoped that a series of years spent in this cause, and the great sum invested in it by our unaided efforts, would have interested the Trust, and that we should have had the gratification of proclaiming their honour at the same time.

Let the future prove whether this is vanity or not. For

the present we will bide our time patiently, and though bitterly disappointed I am in no way disheartened, and with or without the aid of the Trust am content to carry the thing through and see what will be said of this hereafter. My only great regret is that I have been obliged to write this to you, sir, whose hearty support has so often cheered my labours. I trust you will kindly consider what I have written of a public and not a private character.

An appeal was finally made in 1860 to the friends of the school for funds with which to build the chapel.

A splendid subscription of £1000 by Mr. Witts in 1861, on taking a mastership in the school, made it possible to begin building in 1862, and in 1865 the chapel was finished at a cost of nearly £10,000, and presented, as a part of the permanent property of the foundation, to the Trust.

An application for aid in building a schoolroom, made in 1859, met at first with no better success. Strengthened by large guarantees from the masters, it was renewed in 1860 and 1861, when the facts had become so overwhelming that resistance could no longer be made. He was then able also to take a firmer attitude towards the governors. He says in writing to the patron :—

*September 18th*, 1860.

At that time the assistance of the Trust would have been of vital importance to us, fostering and nursing into life the then infant system. Had it been given it must have commanded our lasting gratitude. But it was not given; we had the mortification of seeing the whole power of the Trust diverted to other channels, and had to shift for ourselves. Now we are strong in success, and less inclined to make sacrifices to win a tardy recognition from the Trust, and with higher hopes, but still in a position to feel deeply and gratefully any liberality on their part.

Of the money expended on this fine building, which,

like the chapel, was built under the direction of Mr. Street, a considerable proportion was contributed by the masters. It was finished in 1863, and also presented to the foundation.

It is now impossible to recover many of the facts connected with the prolonged struggle of these early years to refound the school on new lines. But the main features of the struggle can be easily discerned.

As he was without any sufficient funds of his own, he had to find masters willing, on trust in his management, to invest capital in setting up boarding-houses. This was chiefly to be done by encouraging them with subsidies, or by relinquishing a portion of his capitation fees as headmaster. The unwilling governors were to be led or driven into taking some part in providing public buildings. Above all, the internal discipline and character of the school were to be fixed on firm foundations.

Of the methods and principles from which the school had already received so decisive an impulse there is an interesting statement in his notes of 1858:—

> My first step here was to appoint good masters by degrees. . . . The next important step was deciding that priority of appointment should give precedence, but that this should be merely in matter of form. . . .
>
> What classes each should teach is decided by the headmaster as according to fitness. To teach an upper class requires more knowledge—a lower more skill as a teacher.
>
> Again, instead of making each master responsible tuitionally for the boys in his house, *i.e.* making him virtually head and sole master of a small private school, with many sets and many subjects to trouble his bewildered brain, each master is responsible for his class in school alone, and thus works only one set of boys and one set of subjects. These boys he superintends and helps in their lessons out of school also.

Thus there is no scapegoat to put any shortcoming on. If his division does well, it is his credit, not an alien tutor's; if badly, the same. Thus, too, every master is not supposed to be competent to teach the whole school, but to teach his own class well, and in whatever house a boy may be he passes successively through the hands of all the masters instead of being thrown mainly on one, who is sure to treat some part of the school worse than others according to his tastes and main work. Thus, too, each master is enabled to discover thoroughly what each boy in his class can or cannot do.

His pride and interest are concentrated on one object. If he fails in that, exposure is certain, and no excuse is to be found. . . . With respect to the boys we aim at truth, *i.e.* giving them the best of all things in their kind, and perfect freedom within such limits as curtail license. The great point of internal discipline is to make every boy interested in the conduct of his fellows. They are their own lawgivers, inasmuch as the more they show themselves worthy of trust the more rules are relaxed. . . . On the other hand, any infringement of the great rules is followed by the punishment of the individual, his division, and the whole school. Giving great liberty, we deal with crime or treason with great severity.

What *can* be done by anybody if not done is severely dealt with: faults of ignorance, want of ability, or accident, lightly.

It is not *worth while* to tell a lie, as truth is often pardoned —never punished in anything like the same degree.

We mix much with the boys in games . . . many a boy whom we must put at a low level in school redeems his self-respect by the praise bestowed on him as a game player, and the balance of manliness and intellect is more impartially kept. . . .

The complete way in which the school is in hand enables our influence to permeate it in a way impossible in a mob. Every boy feels that *he is known.*

The system of single studies and single partitions in bedrooms, combined with the out-school teaching, allow as much freedom and as much help to be given as possible.

We endeavour by encouraging subordinate studies, for the stupid especially, to make every one capable of doing some-

thing—at least to give all some knowledge, and thus avoid the festering corruption of a heap of hopeless idlers. . . .

Machinery, machinery, machinery, should be the motto of every good school. As little as possible ought to be left to personal merit in the teacher or chance; as much as possible ought to rest on the system and appliances on every side checking vice and fostering good, quietly and unostentatiously, under the commonest guidance and in the most average circumstances. For example, the whole school with few exceptions is engaged with their masters from seven to nine at night every evening. To the schoolboy eye and casual observer it is a matter of teaching and intellectual guidance, and it is this. But to me it is also that during the two most dangerous hours of the twenty-four every one is under the eye of a master. . . . Trust should be unlimited in action, suspicion unlimited in arrangement, and then there will be no need for it afterwards.

When boys are thrown together under circumstances which no man could be safely trusted in, what is the good of whining over breaches of trust. Let the government be protective, liberal, and individually felt. Then you have a right to expect individual honour, but not otherwise. A certain percentage of crime *must* result from inadequate machinery and neglect.

Though the school was now growing fast under the operation of these principles, the governors were taking no part and apparently little interest in its progress. "To this hour," he writes in 1858, "with the single exception of General Johnson, no member of the old Trust has even been to *see* what is done here, although once a year they meet in the schoolroom. . . . General Johnson from the very beginning has been earnest and hearty with advice, sympathy, and support, and the knowledge of this has cheered many a weary hour."

# CHAPTER V

## THE BUILDING OF UPPINGHAM (*continued*)

### 1859-1869

### EXTRACTS FROM DIARY

OF the vicissitudes of this continuous struggle during the first five or six years of his life at Uppingham but a slight summary is given by himself, and only stray glimpses can otherwise be obtained. Progress was steadily made, but at a great expense of effort and suffering. A considerable sum of money had, in the first years of trial and disaster, been borrowed from his father's estate. Payment of this money was required within a comparatively short time, and he had ever upon him the sense of a crushing burden of debt. Meanwhile, the very success of his methods, shown by the rapid increase of numbers in the school, necessitated the appointment of new masters, and the assumption of new obligations for the purpose of supplying the needed school machinery. Thus when his diary begins in 1859 to be a somewhat full though desultory record of his own life and of the progress of the school, it introduces us at once into the very heart of the struggle by which he gradually won his way to success.

Something should here be said of the nature of this diary, of which constant use will be made throughout the following pages. As has been mentioned, it was commenced about five years after he began his work at Uppingham, when already far on his way to assured success, and it was carried on, except during holiday periods, to the close of his life, or for nearly thirty years. At first he seems to have intended it to touch upon the educational side of his life only, and quotations already made illustrate this point of view. But it soon became the repository not merely of facts connected with the school, but of his own inner feelings, his judgments of men and things, his alternating hopes and anxieties, his most intimate personal relationships. Thoughts and opinions for which he did not have freedom of expression in the routine of his daily life he put down freely here, and found a solace in doing so. Although he more than once expresses the hope that his experience may be of assistance or warning to fellow-workers, he apparently came to look upon the diary as likely to interest chiefly his own children with its record of the struggle by which he had overcome difficulties and had lifted the school to success.

Only selections from such a varied, voluminous, and in large part private record can be given. Dealing as it does with circumstances and feelings as they arise from day to day it is necessarily disconnected, but it furnishes the best available means of understanding Thring's work, the obstacles he had to confront, and the spirit in which he overcame them.

Its complete spontaneity makes it more valuable as an illustration of character and purpose than any formal and continuous narrative, and I have therefore not hesitated, using the absolute freedom of judgment which

he chose to give me in dealing with his papers, to let selections from the diary form a considerable part of this biography. To old pupils and others deeply interested in Thring's character, in the workings of his mind, and in the growth of Uppingham school these extracts will not seem too copious, nor will they regret that I have not attempted in all cases to weave them into a closely connected history. Others will find it an advantage to have them so grouped together as to be readily separated, in reading, from the rest of the biography.

I have referred to the spontaneous character of the diary. Readers there may possibly be who will regard the frequent expressions of religious feeling as over-strained and unreal. None who knew Edward Thring, or understood the atmosphere of faith and prayer in which he habitually lived, will share this opinion. "He seemed to see God with his eye"; James Lonsdale writes after a country walk, in which memories of old Eton days spent together had drifted off into talk about present work and a future life.

The remark does not represent too strongly the impression which the intense earnestness of his religious life made upon those around him.

One chief interest of the diary lies in the fact that it reflects with accuracy the writer's ordinary habits of thought.

*Jan. 6th*, 1859.—The difficulty of setting on foot new houses very great. I feel almost inclined to despair sometimes, and sometimes doubt whether I have done right in incurring such great responsibilities, which are so hardly judged by those who do not enter into my views. Are they right? or am I? Yet I would not grudge life in the cause, and why should I not trust Him who has brought it thus far? Faith as a grain of mustard seed shall overthrow mountains. There are indeed

mountains to be overthrown. But some have been pitched into the sea. The rest shall follow. Yet if God will let the necessary weight of a debt which brings in the interference of others be removed.

*Feb. 5th.*—Boys back again; quite pleasant seeing their friendly faces. Fifteen newcomers. The studies and dormitories at the Red House finished. Settled about completing the dwelling-house at midsummer. To borrow the money from Wellingboro' Building Society, and pay off by yearly instalments in fourteen years. Shall insure my life for that time. The contract £1950. Troubles with Alford going on about money.

*Feb. 18th.*—Mr. Stokoe comes to see about taking a mastership. Much pleased with him.

*26th.*—Letter from Stokoe accepting the mastership. May God bless it. He made a very favourable impression on me. I trust my prayers have been heard.

*30th.*—Stokoe came to-day to see to an offer I had made him to induce him to establish his own house. We have come to terms. I am unspeakably thankful; a great weight off my heart. He is a particularly good fellow, which makes me the less regret the liberal terms I have had to offer. Praise and blessing and glory to my great Helper.

*March 3rd.*—Wrote to offer Stokoe the Red House and yard attached for nothing, if he would provide himself with a boarding-house. He would also at 5 per cent. gain £50 per annum during his mastership by the arrangement. But anything for freedom from debt and slavery; anything, *i.e.* but give up this work. Yet it is very bitter—the burden. Alas! that it should be necessary too. Must I bear this cross on and on? His will be done who gave it.

*March 20th.*—A hearty letter from General Johnson, saying that he will back our memorial to the best of his power, but warning us not to expect much, as some of the governors, he fears, have not the prosperity of the school at heart. I know that, but we shall ride over them in time if they won't move on.

*March 24th.*—Made an offer to Baverstock to induce him to free me from all responsibility about his house, by which I shall lose a great deal, but in the present immediate need I

must make the best compromise I can, as so large a sum must be provided at midsummer. (My father has demanded payment.)

*April 2nd.*—An eventful week over. Stokoe and Baverstock both accepted my terms. The last houses necessary for perfect working established. Henceforth we strive for perfecting, and improving, and maturing; hitherto for the existence and establishment of the school and system. *Laus Deo.*

*6th.*—Fresh troubles. A letter from Stokoe to say that his father will not let him fulfil his engagement. Much time has been lost. I have written to state the case, which is so much to his advantage that I can scarcely think, if it is listened to at all, that it will be rejected. 'Tis a weary struggle.

*9th.*—Stokoe can do nothing, but he seems a real good fellow; if so, I cannot regret the trouble and anxiety.

Once upon a time I longed for a sphere to exercise my powers in. God forgive me the thought. Would that I could now hide my head in peace. Both wishes, I fear, are about equally wrong and equally right. What will it all signify—if I can but do my duty—the grinding power and yoke that has been riveted round my neck; the money chain on the one hand, and on the other the work and pain, and pain and work, boys and masters, and masters and boys. Truly I feel, sincerely I acknowledge, the dark ignorance and blinded self-will which has made this thraldom a necessary physic. Yet mercy, for we are but dust, O remember whereof we are made!

*May 19th.*—Most unexpectedly the Cross Keys[1] premises, reaching from my garden to the street, for sale at a moderate price, and the key of the position for future school buildings. The masters met and bought it on the spot. Now we are pretty safe. I have always felt and protested that the right thing would come at the right time, and now just as we were on the eve of getting plans, and much debate about sites, this sudden event takes place and gives us the mastery of the ground we mainly want, besides putting it out of the power of the townspeople to screw us, in a great degree. *Laus Deo.* He will bring it to pass if this is His work. How marvellous,

[1] Three public-houses in all were suppressed and built upon for school purposes.

if the daily fluctuations and struggle could be unfolded, would the progress of this work appear! Opposition where most interest in success; blame and strangulation where most love and help might have been looked for; but the plant thriving from inward strength and unexpected help from divine blessing in spite, nay, in consequence of the human impediments. *Laus Deo.*

*Sept. 10th.*—This day six years ago I began life here, and all day long have my thoughts from time to time come back full of gratitude and a strange dreaming at the past. "With my staff came I over this Jordan, and now I have been made two bands," I may say with Jacob, and I may say it like him with much of what is menacing and difficult about me. How faithless one is! I now understand by myself, alas! how after every miracle God's people were as distrustful almost as ever. Yet there is trust. Let no one hope that enthusiasm or any earthly reward, or love or solaces of work, will keep him fast and true in a really arduous undertaking. I believe I am successful here, at all events men think I am, and at this moment, as I sit here, after six years' experience, I must say that every personal hope of joy in the work has withered. With much to encourage there is so much of doubt, that all the feelings have to be kept in hand and sternly closed up. Whilst the eye and heart uplifted to Heaven alone bring real comfort or the support required, so far as this world goes, I think I could heartily welcome a poorer, quieter lot. I am sure that there is no compensation excepting in God's blessing for the toils of this anxious, but responsible, noble, and therefore happy life. Six years. Θεῷ δόξα.

*Oct. 25th.*—A cheering letter from Mr. Acland, not the first time he has given us a lift. Greatly interested in the statement. Told me to send one to Gladstone and Judge Coleridge. . . . Truly "the work goes on and slacketh not." What a change from six weeks ago! Yet how I now rejoice at the humiliation. It was needed. Now all seems fair and more than fair. We are being brought into the first educational notice in England, and I think the truth of the work will bear the scrutiny. Θεῷ δόξα.

*Nov. 9th.*—Met at 12 and paid our shares of the Cross Keys. Lent C. the money, which he can redeem or not as

he pleases. Heard this evening that Mr.——, whom I thought silenced, has made another appeal to the governors. . . . It seems very hard that there should be no protection against such venomous injuries. It seems to me that parents repay with interest every wrong, real or supposed, to their paragons, but if things go well then it is a matter of course. It is a strange feeling to be spending a life of toil and self-denial in a work of this sort, and to be baited by the very ones for whom one is working. God defend the right.

*Nov. 24th.*—Opened the gymnasium to day—a great boon to the school. The boys crowded in in great glee.

*Nov. 25th.*—Strange what a perpetual struggle this life is. The masters now are engaging in a contest for power with me, and carping daily at something. . . . I am in the habit of hearing and consulting much, but not one hair's-breadth will I ever give way where it is claimed as a right. It is fortunate for them that there is some one to look after common interests. . . Here am I after six years of incessant work, head and chief of this school, £3600 in debt still, and the plea now is that they have advanced on our joint security somewhat under £300. I told —— if that was all, I would give cheques for the amount to-morrow; that I was not going to admit for a moment any plea of a few pounds when I had sunk hundreds and thousands in the cause. It is petty and contemptible. Very long our work would hold together if the headmaster was to be merely the executive of so narrow a set. Yet these are excellent fellows in many ways. Alas for poor human nature! It is a mighty lesson of humility when one gets lifted up a little out of the crowd so as to estimate their blindness. I pray God guide me and give me sight.

*Nov. 26th.*—Had a letter from —— exposing strongly the shocking immorality of the principles there from a master in the school. Felt with pride and happiness how sound and true our men are here. There may be little vexations, but sound and true they are, honourable, good men at heart in spite of my yesterday's trouble. *N.B.*—We all get rather sulky in these short winter days. It is periodical.

*Christmas Eve.*—A calm review of this trying half-year very satisfactory. Immense progress has been made in discipline, in government, and in the external world.

*Feb.* 13*th*, 1860.—The school reopened Saturday. A good entry—sixteen at once—more likely. . . . We begin in good style. Indeed, to my mind, this is the beginning of the school on its new footing—the first time we have started with a perfect staff in full swing. All the masters very pleasant and in good trim. I feel much what an honourable, earnest set they are on the whole. In writing these lines, principally for my children by and by, I leave untouched my earlier feelings and opinions, however momentary or untrue even, in order that they may guess a little the daily trials of this work, and not merely because the result is good think it has been all smooth. Little cares, when the heart is weary and the body faint, coming incessantly, have a very absurdly disproportionate effect in a bystander's eyes. When strong and well and fresh things look and feel very differently. Reading or hearing of toil in great heat is a mighty different thing from being at work on a very hot day. Nothing but feeling can make many of the trials of life *felt*, as many of them turn on states of body, and the mind can only guess at them even when it has once felt them, and how little is that possible if it has never felt them at all.

*Feb.* 28*th.*—Earle has made up his mind to build at once. This is to me not the least noteworthy thing in our career, that Earle should be so hearty and enthusiastic after all our original divergence and his absolute incredulity. How different now!

*Feb.* 29*th.*—I begin to feel the good ship answering to the helm, and trust the money strain of these weary years is about to be removed.

*March* 15*th.*—(After an account of sports, and details of the athletic events.) A most satisfactory afternoon. Everything so genial and pleasant; one feels *one* with the boys. Another satisfactory thing to-night. The sixth form have met and have made some resolutions for the better ordering of the school in various little matters of discipline, which they have given out in every house, and it has been very well received. The government is beginning to work, and the principles to leaven the mass. This is the first public identification of the upper boys with the system in ordinary routine. I feel so thankful. *Laus Deo.* "The work goes on and slacketh

not." They have now taken the matter in hand and made the cause their own. It will not stop here.

*March 18th.*—In writing these notes my object has been to a certain extent to unveil the vicissitudes and daily wear and tear, that no fellow-worker may ever quote me as gliding on to success, but as far as any know it may find my weakness, difficulties, vexations, and doubts a reassuring fact to them in their own lives.

*March 20th.*—This afternoon a gentleman came suddenly to remove a boy who had lately come—an only child—because he had written home in some alarm, having seen some boys caned! The boy proved not quite so great a fool as his mother, and has written again to prevent it. But it is worth noting as an instance of the folly of people. She was going to put him to a second-rate private school as an improvement!! on this.

*March 21st.*—Wm. Earle came in to speak about the case yesterday. He is certainly very nice; in everything connected with work so unassuming and honest. . . . In every respect it is an intense comfort feeling the single-heartedness both of him and Hodgkinson in their working life.

*April 2nd.*—An important day. Proposed to the masters that each of us should take a boy gratis, and thus establish two scholarships yearly of £70 each, tenable for five years. They all took it up warmly, and to-morrow we shall decide and legislate for it. Thus we shall secure the setting of a stream of intellect into the school,—no slight matter, judging from the average of the material we have hitherto had.

*April 29th.*—First service in our schoolroom very satisfactory. Nothing marks our progress more to my mind than the changes in our church position, when I recall our painful beginning in the gallery, and the parish service.

*May 7th.*—Then to-day —— comes to me again with the unheard of baseness of his boys stealing things from his garden when allowed to walk there. The taint of meanness in that house seems fearful. . . . I have sentenced the house to take a daily walk two and two in silence with Robinson for a week, and each boy to pay him his 6d. allowance for his time and trouble. This will serve them right—private school tricks shall have private school treatment.

*May 10th.*—It has been a great comfort to me in this last week to find that —— is a real disciple in teaching, and that, though I have failed almost entirely in any actual teaching reform here, the idea will not die. The failure does not seem the same thing now I know that the seed is consciously sown, and the distinction between the rule world and the principle world growing into rules thoroughly grasped.

*June 1st.*—Took a stroll with ——. Talked education and the lectures on composition and the artistic eye that I had been giving my boys: how literary education if true is not book-worm work, but the giving the subtle faculty of observation, the faculty of seeing, the eye and mind to catch hidden truths, and new creative germs. If the cursed rule-mongering and technical terms could be banished to limbo something might be done. Three parts of teaching and learning in England is the hiding common sense and disguising ignorance under phrases.

*June 2nd.*—I thank God with all my heart for another proof of His mercy and the power of good. A. came in to me to-night to confess to having played cards at Buckingham on Thursday. It was a great temptation; they had to wait there three hours, and I doubt not some of the other eleven asked them. But he was pretty cut up about it, and said, with tears, he could not go to the Holy Communion to-morrow without telling me. I comforted him. Thank God for giving him strength to confess. It makes me full of hope and trust. He has been excellent as a captain this year, greatly improved. If, as I hope, he is won, glory to God for His goodness. It gives me strength to persevere and have faith when I see such fruits.

*Aug. 9th.*—Home yesterday from Germany after the pleasantest holidays I have yet had. . . . *10th.*—Saw most of the masters: very pleasant their hearty, friendly greetings. I could not help being proud of their gentlemanly bearing and appearance.

*Oct. 12th.*—Summoned to the governors. I really believe they have taken our schoolroom in hand. A great thing for us if they have, and a great thing, I may say, for them, as it is the last time they could with real credit take up this school. If they act now they will be fairly entitled to credit. They

were very courteous, and we now have some friends amongst them besides the General. A great party in hall in the evening, which went off well.

*Oct. 17th.*—I have had much talk with Mr. Warbrough (from Bristol). I think they will found a really fine school on our system. He seems very sensible, liberal, and earnest, and has entered very fully into our work. He told me he intended to draw up a much more extensive report for his colleagues than he contemplated at first, and wished to submit it to me when ready in order that he might not misrepresent our views. This is a great thing. I cannot but feel greatly strengthened by such a tribute, at the same time that it will be an immense engine of power for reforming education.

*Oct. 23rd.*—Could not help feeling bitterly, as I was writing to a man to-day about the proposed Bristol scheme, at the zeal and liberality there contrasted with everything mean, petty, and obstructive here, the governors setting the example, which has been well followed.

*Oct. 29th.*—Mr. Warbrough's report for Clifton College came for me to review, and also a very nice letter from Mr. Acland, both of which give us a great lift, and fresh openings for getting out our principles. Mr. W. speaks in very high terms of Uppingham.

*Nov. 2nd.*—What a weight and an awe life and its work is at times! O Holy Spirit, do Thou keep my heart. One feels such a tendency to harden, to lose feeling and settle down into grinding work, and be the slave of work and not its master. The greatness of the work here, its dangers and difficulties, sometimes oppress me much. How manifold, how complicated, how unassisted by ordinary aids, every hand almost against us whenever we move! Yet "Put not your trust in princes." The living power of this true principle is becoming a mighty thing. Its walls have risen, as they fabled those of Troy did, to the music of Faith, like a cloud out of the ground, by no mortal power. God grant we may not complete the fable, and when successful, in our pride defraud the Immortal Builder. Give us humble hearts, O God, humble and faithful, and then I need not pray for strength.

*Nov. 11th.*—I clearly see in the other great schools how the tutor system keeps them going. One good tutor and ten

bad, *i.e.* one good private school and ten bad, the one good will be successful enough to shield the ten bad, whereas in my system, as it is a system, a thoroughly bad manager might almost spoil all, as the parts must more or less work together, and no one master turns out a boy completely independent of his fellows, as with them. Thus though we are not so likely to get to so low a pitch as they, and under favourable conditions must be at a far higher average, some good work might be done with them when ten-elevenths were bad, whereas that would be impossible with us.

*Nov.* 17*th.*—A most refreshing note from mother to-day, saying that Fitzgerald had heard from the bishop that the Bristol people were going to adopt our system as the best of all the public schools. So it is getting pretty widely known in Somersetshire. How my father will gloat over that! I am so glad. I do hope they may both live to forget their doubts and to rejoice heartily in my success here. I am so thankful for this ray of sunlight.

Under the pressure of great outside private cares, he says:—

*Nov.* 18*th.*—I felt deeply thankful for being engaged on a real, true work, I trust for God. These sorrows probe and test the heart and motives not a little, and knock about most rudely the fair weather thoughts and feelings. When the waters come in even unto one's soul, how glad one is of a plank from above; how thankful for the feeling of working for Christ, in some degree at all events! It dwarfs at once, too, into its proper proportions the baby frettings of foolish coadjutors. . . .

*Nov.* 21*st.*—Had a little bit of good from General Johnson, who, in returning the Clifton College document, said if not marked "private," and he did not see why it should be, he should like all the governors to see it at the meeting which he hoped would take place almost immediately. I sent it back at once, adding the bishop's news, and some information about what the Bristolians were going to do; the sum they had already spent, £13,000, in a site, and what they intended next, a fine schoolroom! This will work in no small degree, I trust, reassuring some and frightening others of my trustees. What should I have done without the old General?

*Nov.* 26*th.*—Wrote to General Johnson, as he had given me

the opportunity, to state positively that if we had any share in the schoolroom we should not be content with less than we had asked for, and also to put before him how others recognised the work if the Trust didn't, and that we were now in the front rank of English schools, and were not afraid to appeal for help to the public, or inclined to put up with half measures from the Trust. What should we have done without the General and his support, not least the channel he has been for us to bring forward without insulting them all, the unpleasant truths we had to tell the Trust.

*Nov.* 30*th.*—This night I stand victorious at the top of the breach. For seven years the Trust has been before my eyes as a massive wall in the way, foiling effort after effort to make any real impression on it. To-day they have decided on building our schoolroom, submitting the plans for our approval before they are carried out. General Johnson was there. What has he not been to us? To my great satisfaction I saw my strong letter to him on the table for the edification of the trustees. Not the least part of the victory is, that it is a victory, not a thing sneaked into; every step of ground has been won inch by inch, not quarrelsomely, but in war, as an independent power, since from the very first I have used the same tone and said the same things. It may be now they have yielded they will take a pride in the school. . . . Indeed my mind has run upon it very little, yet I do feel a strong sense of I trust righteous triumph, and trust in Him who gives the battle to whom He pleases, and who has enabled me to overthrow the stronger. The Psalms this night came in wonderfully with the events of the day. My heart is full of gratitude and my hands feel strong for the future, though there is much heavy work before us. . . .

*Dec.* 20*th.*—When I look back on this half-year the stride we have taken seems wonderful. It has been very heavy for me, but I never felt so distinctly triumphant and to have gained so much as this time. . . . The school in excellent order, and on their mettle in scholarship at last. The governors beaten into a new schoolroom. All the cottages wanted to complete the new site bought, excepting one. . . . This has long been a dream of mine. Clifton College and the honour that brings us, in Somersetshire too, where I most desire it. All these

things fill me with thankfulness, and praise, and faith for the future . . . Θεῷ δόξα.

*Dec. 31st.*—The last day of a very eventful year. Much good, much bad; a hard year, but with much progress. The debt still heavy on me, but the main work completed externally. Much unpleasantness among masters, but the rebellious spirit put down, or nearly so, and the main work put on a firm basis there too. Much evil in the school, but still just as above, resulting in a settling and consolidating the internal government. So 1861 opens with the brightest prospects I have yet had. May God be with us whatever comes. On looking back a full year I can hardly believe this is the same place, so great has been the outward stride—more visibly great than in any preceding year. Not perhaps in mere numbers, though that has been good (we number 169 in all, I believe), so much as in power and firmness.

*Feb. 11th*, 1861.—A weary day. The governors over here wrangling about the schoolroom and site. They choose to be dissatisfied with the site. . . . They made a feint of ending the business, which did not move us. After much tedious discussion and shameful forgetfulness on their part of what we had done, came away and left them arguing. They at last sent a message to say that they wished to do all that we wanted! and would send Mr. —— to report on the best site and means of building. I sent back that I was sure the masters would not take Mr. ——, who is no man for that style, but if they would send down Street or Scott, or Woodyer or Butterfield, or any man of proved renown in that line, we would consider his opinion on the site and building conclusive. So there it rests at present. General Johnson was there; he is an amazing trump—came in half-way yesterday to be able to attend—85 years old. Such a cold day to-day too, snow and frost. I do not know when I have been so vexed as to-day, to hear men criticise and handle our liberal offer, giving nothing themselves and knowing little.

*Feb. 16th.*—Heard from Day this morning the governors have adjourned the whole question to the audit. Words cannot express my disgust. Delay is just the one thing fatal to us, and that is what they are at. However we shall beat them yet, and the shame will be theirs. . . .

*Feb. 21st.*—Lecture on education in the schoolroom from Mr. Warren—interesting—to me worth anything; I trust to the school too. I had been praying to-day to be relieved from my heavy debt, or at least given strength to bear it, when, lo! to-night the lecturer finished his account by an anecdote illustrative of school which had made his heart beat high; saying that a boy had been travelling in France last summer full of life and spirits, and had been asked by his companions to start early on Sunday to have a long day, and he refused. On being pressed he said, No, he wouldn't do it, the headmaster would not like it. They laughed and told him his headmaster was a good five hundred miles away; what would that signify; 'twas nonsense. But he was all the more firm at this. Then the lecturer turned round towards me and said, "That boy was from Uppingham; that headmaster was you, sir." I could have burst into tears, I was so touched. The school cheered vehemently, greatly pleased. When it ceased I rose and said I was sure they would all thank Mr. Warren; that they must feel what I at all events felt deeply. I thanked the school for having given one such; I thought there were many among them; I trusted there would be all. O God, I do thank Thee. This may well nerve me for many a weary, anxious, money careful day. It is not all lost. (Bartholomew was the boy.)

*Feb. 22nd.*—How faithless one is; here to-day my heart has been weighed down utterly by money cares and debt. It does seem so hard to toil and toil and toil, and still to be so trammelled, so anxious. Often the words come into my mind: "The children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth." I am just one year's income behind my wants and needs, and utterly crippled, and ever pained by it. Having, too, again and again made sacrifices for others, and always finding from them ingratitude and obloquy. The men, beginning with —— for whom I have done most to win them to work, have been most unworking, most criticising, most abusive. Seven years now the yoke has been on me. . . . . Yet I fear my heart is too rebellious, too faithless. I know the blessing there has been on me here and on this work, and nevertheless cannot shake off or bear this agony, and am ready to say—any burden but this—when doubtless

another burden would wring out the same faithless cry. Or if not, the very fact of the cry shows the fitness of the burden. Yet, O God, have mercy; remember we are but dust.

*Feb. 26th.*—How I feel the good of young people being bred up with affluent notions, even when in after life their existence is quite different, they are ready if they have principle to engage in large works which a more grinding experience would blight before starting. This seems to me to compensate very much the disadvantage it sometimes is when lower natures require accustomed luxuries. Even then they are not so petty as a more trying and sordid training would have made them. Selfishness is not the worse for being a little less coarse.

*March 22nd.*—I sometimes think the incessant nagging and worry dulls the brain somewhat too. I am sure the bearing up against it year after year is no common task, a very different thing from working however hard by one's self. Here one suffers by all the mistakes of others, and those who make mistakes assume the most, and prophesy failure which their own shortcomings go far to fulfil.

*April 11th.*—One learns by experience how different it is being able to do a thing once and many times; to walk one or thirty miles without stopping. Much of the secret of life turns on this; it is endurance, God-given endurance, not intellect, which does great things. How often I feel as if I could sit down and let all go, so incessant is the struggle. Just as at Tenby, when I climbed a very steep slope under a burning sun for half an hour or more, crawling over gorse bushes with my naked hands, and death to let go, so is life now, very much. It is the prolonged strain and the turning yourself body and soul into a pincushion that is so trying. One gorse grasp is nothing, but a series is no joke.

*April 16th.*—Had a very nice proof though to-day of the school working. I found in my study an exceedingly genuine expression of penitence from E—— in a letter to me. He has also done the same to H——. To reclaim a boy seems to me the most heavenly proof of true principles.

*April 18th.*—Spoke to M—— himself to-night; am afraid there is no sign of true penitence whatever; he made some excuses, and looked as sullen and unyielding as possible. I

tried to put his life here strongly before him and what it would lead to, and said that I should watch with much interest whether he was truly sorry for his sin as sin, and not merely because of the consequences. He may be touched, but I fear not.

*April 23rd.*—The audit. Came in about two o'clock and was very courteously received by the governors, and at last the whole thing is finished. They buy all the cottages, about £800, and guarantee us £2500 to be paid in eight years. We raise the money and pay the interest, so that in fact we have our new Quad and a schoolroom given us on our paying rent for eight years, which is what it comes to. And I trust all unpleasant audits are come to an end. It seems like a dream; we have at last got more than we hoped for, and there is no unpleasantness, but all smooth. Scott is appointed architect. Butterfield, if he cannot at once undertake it. The old General was there. Θεῷ δόξα.

. . . I have rather dissuaded the masters from taking any step against—— unless they get some positive proof. Unhappily so much of life turns on judgment, and that on a balancing of many particulars, whereas if a man challenges it the best grounds in the world go very little way. Besides, I think the true principle in a society like this is to leave a man to his fate rather than to interfere, unless he breaks positive school law and routine. But it is a heart-breaking process rather being patient when the folly or worse of one so deeply compromises the interests of all.

*April 29th.*—This morning a letter from Witts, whom I have twice asked to take a mastership here, telling me that his brother is dying and probably in straits, and asking if I would renew my offer. How wonderfully things are brought about! Of all living men I had rather have him as a colleague, and now he asks me when I thought it was all over, and if he comes will build a house and set himself up. I am exceedingly cheered and strengthened by this. . . . I know no more conscientious, hard-working, nice-minded fellow than Witts is, full of information and with a great connection.

*April 30th.*—Mr. J—— has written to say unless I make some silly retractation or other he will remove his two boys and lay the case before the governors. I answered him very

shortly. It is wonderful what shameful fools men are. One need be a schoolmaster to fathom the recklessness, the conceit, the ingratitude, the abject folly of men.

*May 6th.*—The J—— affair ended to-day. The boys are to leave the day after to-morrow. Certainly one learns to form charitable judgments. Taking our experience I do not see how a second-rate school can stand the pressure of ingratitude, folly, ignorance, insolence, and meddling of too many parents. Moreover, unless one tries hard to keep one's heart untainted and fixed on religious motives, the tendency to harden and get reckless, to lose depth of feeling and earnest sympathy, is very great. I pray God keep our hearts child-like and gentle.

*May 22nd.*—Witts came about twelve, and I think is sure to take a mastership here, and so at one swoop all my main difficulties vanish away. I get here the best working man I have ever known, a man of wide travel and varied accomplishments. He will build a house at once; he is eager to buy up Lord Harborough's land, which it seemed such a pity to let go. He will start a chapel subscription with £1000, and . . . will be a support to me in age and standing. It is wonderful; it is a miracle. How I prayed over some of these points, seeing no way by which they could be brought about, when, lo! they are brought about in this unexpected and more than hoped for manner. Or at least if it is not to come to pass, I have been shown how God could grant it if it was good, and I will try to school my heart in case He judges it not to be. Yet I trust He will bring it to pass. Θεῷ δόξα.

*May 23rd.*—It seems to me even now like a dream, the possibility of so much coming to pass at once. Went to Wilson's about the land, and have at once set him to see about buying it by private contract.

*June 1st.*—A letter from Witts practically deciding to come, though not quite the formal conclusion. Since I have been here nothing more marvellous has happened to comfort, assure, and strengthen me. How I prayed for help this half-year, and now at once "they had rowed hard all night and made little way, when all at once He came and they were at the haven where they would be." Even such is His sending of Witts to me.

*June 2nd.*—The masters I have told exceedingly pleased and encouraged by Witts' coming. It is wonderful what a settling of all difficulties on all sides it will be, governors, town . . . , everything.

*June 5th.*—Witts comes for certain. My heart is full of thankfulness, but as yet I hardly realise all it is to me. This is a full compensation for this weary grinding half-year. I do feel grateful. I hope to see him here to-morrow or next day. Θεῷ δόξα, Amen.

*August 5th.*—Came back on Saturday night after very satisfactory holidays; for the first time since I have been here with no master cares on my hands. I could not help feeling strongly as I sat in the garden at M——'s late house that I was now indeed beginning. That house and garden is identified in my mind with all my efforts here. It is the nest egg, the first venture out of which all grew, so I am very glad to have it back again.

The schoolroom still drags on its slow length. I accepted the proposal of the governors, with the exception of giving a smaller bit of Hodgkinson's garden up, viz., that they should give £2500 and the old schoolroom, and that we should undertake the building. Then they had another meeting, and made a final decree to this effect apparently, only that it was open to the interpretation that we bound ourselves to spend £3000 in building. I accepted their decree, declaring that we only bound ourselves to spend £2100 in actual building, as the Cross Keys and cottages cost £2000, and I am now waiting to hear whether my interpretation is correct. Scott in the most handsome manner, in his report, repudiated taking the work out of Street's hands, and practically snubbed the governors soundly for their behaviour in thinking of it.

*August 23rd.*—Words cannot tell the intense relief the present state of things is to me. For one thing I have a thorough appetite for my meals now, which I have never had before under the perpetual load of care and anxiety which was always on me, though less felt sometimes than at others. Now, though money is still tight, I feel quite light-hearted and unoppressed. We are in all main points so united, and the work is progressing on a sure basis.

*September 1st.*—The whole field of my life here is altered

more than I can tell by the departure of the last great internal drawback. There is a serene peace and a joy in work returning which I have not felt for many years, and with it my health is so much improved that it is not like the same thing. There is much, very much, still to be done, but it is easy to work when the sense of soundness and of support is strong, instead of feeling for ever as if sitting over a mine which might explode at any time, combined with a carping criticism from the very persons who, by their misdoings, made their own prophecies come true.

*September 3rd.*—H—— proposed an excellent scheme this morning to fund the schoolroom debt, and to keep the whole schoolroom in our hands, which was agreed to *nem. con.* I went and got my bank-book, and am greatly dismayed at finding how much the debt has grown on me this last two years. My heart is very sad. God knows best, but it is very bitter to be trammelled so many years. I feel very harassed. Marie and I knelt and prayed for deliverance if possible, and I have promised, vowed, I might almost say, to undertake no fresh responsibility or expense till free. God bless us in both. If it is Thy work, O God, do Thou uphold us. Is it my impatient want of faith that has plunged me in debt? yet surely the coming of —— here was Thy visitation, O God, and that began it. O save and keep us, and perfect this work, we beseech Thee.

*September 10th.*—We all signed the agreement, and those of us who were to, the bond for the money for the trustees; all as smooth as can be.

*September 16th.*—The schoolroom plans came yesterday, and are very beautiful. I only hope we may be able to carry them out. . . . Wrote a circular to be printed, and sent to all the governors to ask them to act on the Chapel Committee and to subscribe . . . It amuses me to think what a squib in the midst of them it will be, and how it will puzzle some of them to know what to do.

*September 18th.*—Sent off our appeal, but I no longer feel anxious about these things, all will come in good time, though not perhaps the way we think, and I have a sort of feeling that the work will have to be carried through by self-sacrifice, and that the riches and power of the world will not be

permitted to take much share in it. . . . Sundry builders here to-day. I trust we shall get our contract taken. We have beautiful plans, and it is very vexatious to think how the Trust has treated us in the sum given, and the terms by which they have screwed £500 more out of us than our original offer of £1130, whereas we ought not to have paid a single penny. . . .

*September 19th.*—Nothing but fears about the schoolroom, and what we are to do if the contract is not taken. It seems hard to give it up, but I had rather do that than put up an inferior building.

*September 27th.*—This afternoon a most welcome letter; the Dean of Westminster will be on our committee. . . . This morning received a £5 note from Mr. Gladstone, and leave to put his name on the Chapel Committee. All the masters are delighted.

*October 1st.*—I feel so happy at having again at least a hundred communicants in the school—real communicants, who come of their own free will. . . . This week has been a week of great blessing to us. First Bishop Chapman's visit and his blessing the school, and then our confirmation. I feel deeply the peace and confidence of such divine aid.

*October 4th.*—I cannot help thinking sometimes that there must be something wrong in one's composition. The incessant strain and unrest of this life is so great. Is all life so? all hearty working life, that is, or is it my fault? I fear we schoolmasters must be content with but little comfort, and but little visible realisation of goodness and honour amongst the multitude to any extent, at the time at all events. We must have faith to see the unseen. God grant it.

*October 11th.*—Governors' meeting. Numbers shown in 175, 171 boarders and 4 day boys.

*October 17th.*—Delighted by a letter from Mr. Acland, most hearty and thorough, giving me leave to put his name on our committee, and telling me he has been strongly advising my being examined by the Public School Commission. I am glad of his name. He was the first public man who gave me a cheering word here; I shall not forget that as long, I think, as I remember anything. Rawnsley was the first friend who sent his son, and dear old Newbolt the first family

neighbour who announced his intention of backing me by sending his.

*November 4th.*—Letters from my Aunt —— and Uncle —— in answer to my appeal; civil, but they will give nothing. It is strange how seldom any help is got from those who ought to help. . . . How one finds as life goes on what a far stronger tie unity of spirit is than anything else! He who follows Christ is to find a thousandfold what he gives up even now.

*November 5th.*—To my surprise and pleasure a hearty letter from my Uncle Henry, and a promise of £10. I am very glad of it. My father also wrote me a kind letter and will give £20, my mother £5. . . . Would to God our debt was wiped off. I have been thinking much of it to-day. His will be done, and certainly I have much reason to trust it, but, alas! debt is very bitter. Have been talking to my wife to-night about it. She thinks of the children. I am not afraid for them. If ever I believed anything, I believe God's promise that if we sought Him first He would repay it. They will not want, or if they do it will be blessed to them. And it is just want of faith about children which stops many a man who is not afraid for himself. Had a very cheering letter forwarded me this morning by the guardian of one of the boys, who wants to subscribe £5 on account of the good the school has done him, and who quotes with pride my declaration that to have been at Uppingham must be a passport for honour, integrity, and manliness. He is a heavy, ill-educated fellow too. If he has felt this so strongly the leaven has been working. God be praised for this. These things cheer the heavy heart weighed down by earthly cares and money gnawing anxieties.

*November 20th.*—I heard to-day that the governors openly proclaim their disapproval of our having changed the system here and raised the school. I could laugh when I recollect my childish dreams when I first came, of how I would be liberal, and not ask them till I had proved my sincerity, and the goodness of the system, and then—how they would meet me in funds and gladly help us on!

*December 1st.*—Witts back from London, and gives a most successful account of his visit to Street. We are to

have the windows of Oakham Castle for the great schoolroom. So the governors will understand that. Street is quite up to them. He told Witts that a son of one of them told him in Oxford that the fact was the governors did not approve of the change in Uppingham, and wished it to remain in its old state. This is also what Miss F—— told Mrs. Bell the other day too. It is a great advantage their daring to speak so plainly.

*December 6th.*—Much cheered this morning by Lord Gainsborough giving us a promise of £50 for the chapel.

*December 13th.*—The main body of the school gone and all well. Thank God for having got over this half-year quietly. . . . This has been a wonderful year. What a miracle the whole place is with all its buildings and power! . . . The school is now wonderfully clear of direct evil. There is not now one bad boy here of any age.

*Christmas Day.*—Another come round again, and (excepting money burdens), how free from care! What a noble band of men are now united with me here, and what an unceasing help my own dear wife has always been! Never have I had a discouraging or reproachful word from her in all my great ventures, and its heavy money burdens, and the way in which all her work is well done is an inexpressible support to me. Had not my home been capable, helpful, and happy, I think I should have died in these sore years. On Monday I rebought Matthias' late house, raising the money on mortgage and bond for £2000. May this be blessed, and not a stone round my neck.

*January 4th*, 1862.—Came back yesterday after a pleasant visit at Shiplake. A momentous year ended. It is impossible to overrate it to me and the school. . . . Witts and Rowe have come, and two fine houses set on foot. The schoolroom controversy nearly brought to an end, and a chapel fund advancing steadily, while the school internally is in first-rate order. To set against this the expense has been crushing, and I am nearly at my wit's end for want of money. To-day my heart well-nigh failed me as I thought of our debt and the difficulties before us, and earnestly and bitterly I prayed to God for help and deliverance. Next week there is a meeting of the governors about the schoolroom plans. . . .

I never began a year with so much promise, and at the same time things are very critical too. May He who best can bless, keep, and sanctify us in this sore trial and severe strain, and turn the evil to good. Cloudy the year begins to me, full of clouds, but the sun is visible behind. O may He burst through this barrier, and shed light on our work. Must I always work in chains, O God? If so, give me heart to say, "Thy will be done."

*January 7th.*—Heard yesterday morning of the death of dear old aunt at Clifton. This alters all our plans. I go to Alford for the funeral on Thursday. . . . The long journey is both sad and expensive.

*January 15th.*—An eventful week over last Saturday; one of the most eventful, as far as visible facts go, in my career. I went down to Alford to Thursday, and my father was exceedingly pleased I had come. To my astonishment, for I did not know my old aunt had anything to leave, I find myself with a legacy of £500. This wonderful answer to my prayers, this help and deliverance in part has greatly comforted me. Then on Friday I hear both the school plans and the chapel have been passed by the governors, and I hope now all serious difficulties on this score are at an end. In the meantime the J—— affair[1] has assumed gigantic proportions, as I have been honoured with scurrilous leading articles or notices in sundry of the low papers. . . . Private letters of the vilest abuse come in, and one can but sit still and bear it all as one best may. . . . Some harm it will doubtless do, but I trust good also. I feel so sure of being right, and the malice and lying are so bitter that I trust in God against such iniquity, and were it a thousandfold what it is would still do so. I may truly say in this matter, "God is on my side, I will not be afraid what man can do unto me."

*January 23rd.*—Sent off 30 or 40 letters this morning on

[1] Several boys had been flogged for want of punctuality in returning to school after the Christmas holidays. The father of two of the boys protested, and published his correspondence with the headmaster. The public discussion of the matter gave Thring a reputation for severity in school management, but in the end greatly strengthened his position in the school.

the J—— business, principally to those who had made applications. Every day I hear of fresh leading articles or notices; some nice things too from friends.

*January 24th.*—A cheering day in many respects. Mr. —— comes to-morrow and will certainly send one if not more sons. . . . Then the clerical Journal has a favourable article from the *Field* on the J—— case. . . . Another letter, too, from a Liverpool man who had asked my advice, and who did not care for the J—— affair, which he had seen. Every one is not a fool. But what a waste of power this sort of thing is! I am occupied every day for some hours in correspondence mainly excited by this, instead of being able to read and employ myself in a sensible way.

*Sunday, 26th.*—The last day of my holidays. Have been reading one of the Christian Knowledge little books, *Alice Gray*. Blessings on the simple little stories of my generation. If the day is hotter and the burden heavier, these little fountains and breezes keep the heart refreshed and pure. How much I owe to them!

*January 31st.*—I really think we shall have the best entry we have yet had. It is a great cause for gratitude. To-morrow we begin again.

*February 2nd.*—To-day has been quiet, and I have felt strong in purpose and endurance. Yet a strange shadow of awe and imagining has wrapt me about very much to-day; glimpses of eternal purposes, and my own weakness and shrinking mixed up with faith and prayer, and readiness to do and act, stirrings of unknown futures, strange contradictions of humility and power, strength and defeat, or seeming contradictions clashing within; a desolate, chilling sense of the wickedness of the world and the difficulty of doing good combined with a quiet perception of Christ and His working, and the need of working like Him, and that these earth chills arise just because the work is His. In a wintry land the brilliant ice-shapes spangle and shine unthawed and also unhurt by night. But when the sun draws out life from the earth darkness raises fogs to blight it. An evil success rouses no enmity in the evil, is applauded by the world, but truth must face the storm.

*February 4th.*—Another very malignant article sent me

has rather clouded my day. The Dean of Ely[1] brought his son to-day, and sundry parents have occupied my time. I feel very weary-hearted again, perhaps simply because I am tired. . . . I really feel to-night so jaded, and badgered, and faithless, and hard, that a little (or much) of the old Adam rises, and I almost long to plunge into some fierce reality instead of holding on in patience and power . . . instead of the long restraint, the bearing the quiet daily efforts, the self-control, the real, true life of Christ.

*February 8th.*—In the afternoon I was exceedingly cut up by finding a most sarcastic satire on me in the *Saturday Review.* I am not ashamed to confess that to find educated gentlemen joining in this scurrilous attack was a very bitter pill, not only personally, but more and more making me fear for education generally. However, I defy the devil and all his works. . . . There is a stern reality about this life, its trials and temptations. I feel Scripture so. But yet would that I had more faith.

*February 9th.*—A quiet day; the Holy Communion—very comforting. Preached in the afternoon for an Uppingham missionary in Australia, Mr. Greaves, one of Holden's most valued pupils. That and the offertory came to £12 for him.

*February 10th.*—Hateful as the turmoil is, I am much supported and very little cast down. The greatest nuisance is expecting every post to find one's self pilloried in some fresh newspaper.

*February 12th.*—It seems most strange to me that the depth of interest in the work here, and all that appears calculated to draw out feeling and love for it, should be suffered to be so rudely swept away and blighted. May it not be that this feeling is of self and human, whereas Christ would have an unselfish and heavenly motive for work. I know not. The fact is certain: the reason I believe to be this. For assuredly He does train us in the best way.

*February 14th.*—Was asked to play football to-day; the Sixth against the school. Did so, though I have long ago given up regular playing; it is too severe. Had a first-rate

[1] Harvey Goodwin, afterwards Bishop of Carlisle.

game. They play a great deal better than when I left off, indeed they play beautifully. I could not help thinking with some pride what headmaster of a great school had ever played a match at football before. Would either dignity or shin suffer it? I think not.

*February 22nd.*—Played football again to-day. Am reading with two of my first form for the Christ's scholarships. I must say the terms one is on with the older boys are simply delightful. I am so gratified by the way they always bring me any little bit of literary news they think will interest me.

*February 24th.*—I have felt very happy to-day. I paid the rector the last instalment of our £500 subscription to the church. £170 and rather upwards of it has come out of my own pocket; for S——'s and M——'s departure made it fall very heavy. I saw *Punch* to-day; its J—— article is really very sensible and good.

*Wednesday, April 2nd.*—The beginning this new book (of the Diary) fills me with solemn thoughts. What will its records be, shall I ever finish it? The first day of it has begun with an auspicious event, as yesterday we gave a concert to the town which went off exceedingly well. I rejoice exceedingly, and look on it quite as an epoch in the school history. For first of all, it is of infinite advantage to have been able to find a way of publicly knowing and benefiting the town. The choir has been much raised in dignity by it too, and will be greatly improved in consequence of the increased zeal. After the concert was over we gave the choir a stand-up supper in hall here, which was no bad part of the ceremony.

*April 5th.*—If either of their[1] parents are wicked enough to attack us we run very great risk, in spite of being quite right in both cases. But it must be done if the risk was ruin, better that than lower the school morality. I would it was only my own concern, though. The many others who are involved in the fate of the school make reverses very hard to bear. But I will try "not to be afraid what man can do unto me."

*Sunday, 6th.*—A quiet, peaceful day, though wet and dreary in the morning. What a blessing the Sundays are!

[1] The expulsion of two boys seemed necessary.

How much vexation and care I bury on them, resting, and worshipping God, and often receiving of His peace!

*April 14th.*—Heard this morning the good news that both my candidates have succeeded, Blyth and two others being bracketed together for scholarships of £70. Then Nettleship for one of £50, and then two others, one a Rugby man, for £30 each. This has been an immense lightening of care, and is most providential, just coming in at the nick of time to encourage the school and inspirit its work. Two also does not look like a chance, but the state of the school.

*April 19th.*—I am sick of parental jaw. When will people learn that in nine cases out of ten they only hear half the evil against their children. Honesty is a very hard thing for a schoolmaster; self-interest in these carping days of shame and delusions makes it a brave man's work to face his duty of punishing evildoers, whilst the great anxiety and grind of the work may make even an honest and brave man pause before he draws upon himself the fresh evil and annoyance of an angry parent in these days of lying and publicity.

*May 2nd.*—This afternoon at 5.45 I gave out the prizes for our sports, and made a speech to the school as usual. These occasions are of wonderful importance for enunciating and exemplifying our life.

*May 6th.*—A nice letter from Sir F. Gore Ousely, saying he will do his best to get us a music master.

*May 10th.*—A trying week over. Some of the boys very busy collecting money for the chapel. It is very pleasing to find the honest interest they take in the things. I value their zeal more than all the rest. This has been a very eventful half-year, perhaps the most eventful externally that we have spent, but God is bringing it to a successful close. Θεῷ δόξα.

*May 11th.*—A quiet, calm, pleasant day, with a sort of feeling of coming battle about it, "the lull before a tempest," a far-off murmur of schoolrooms, and chapels, and governors, and commissioners, and brothers, and masters, all blended together as about to wake into noise and strife. I pray not. Would that life was but work and the fighting away. But what matters the pictures on the slides if at the end there is something real.

*May 13th.*—The schoolroom really, I believe, settled, and

I have written to Street to come down and mark out the ground for both at once. Am engaged in correspondence about a new music master.

*May 14th.*—I feel very weary day by day. Bed, as at Ilminster, has become to me again the best part of the day. Debated this morning whether we should lay a first stone for our chapel at all. I get very tired of the perpetual friction or dread of friction. I understand what men meant in past days by the "cold shade of the aristocracy." To do hard, anxious, and responsible work with a dead man tied to you, Mezentius-wise, is no joke. I am full of care, too full —*μὴ μεριμνάτε*. Yes, but where is there such faith? Would to God I had it, I am very weary. We make a beginning this week in the schoolroom. Am divided in mind about the appointment of my new singing master. Have also on my hands the want of a classical master to fill up Witts's present house when he leaves it at midsummer. One pleasure to-day, a beautiful copy of English verse translation from Nettleship minor.[1] He will indeed be a star if he goes on, and a steadier, nicer fellow never breathed, or more trustworthy.

*May 17th.*—Saturday seems to be a day of important news and doings for me. To-day I signed the schoolroom contract, and Witts and I signed the first contract for the chapel. May the blessing of God rest upon it and complete it. The schoolroom is to be finished by 31st March 1863. The step itself is very weighty, and full of daring and anxiety, increased indefinitely by the temper of the Trust, and the uncertainty whether we shall ever be free from molestation from them. It is doubtless good, but every stone here is laid in sorrow and fear, and mortared with sweat, and blood, and perplexity. God help us.

*Sunday, May 18th.*—A fine day, quiet and peaceful, enabling me to consecrate somewhat yesterday's work by prayer and praise. Indeed I have been singularly free to-day from care and thought.

*May 19th.*—Care and thought enough to-day. H—— came in after twelve on this chapel site business, and I explained to him that I was to blame if it was blameworthy,

[1] Lewis Nettleship.

inasmuch as knowing his settled opinions about the ground, I thought we could settle the whole matter when I found there was room enough, without any application to him, and that I did not think he was in any way injured, as until the studies were pulled down there was nothing absurd in his keeping his ground. He spoke in very strong terms of the dishonourable manner in which we had behaved, and the light in which it put him. In the evening I wrote him a note apologising again, asserting that it was only deference to him that made me avoid the subject before, and suggesting what I thought from some words he dropped would be a compromise. He came in soon after, and though not in such warm terms, reiterated all he had said, rejected the other plan, accused me of often bungling and creating confusion by my unwillingness to put things plain, that I had lost position and respect by this very often, and should be harshly judged by the external world if the things were known, and more in the same strain. I know that the wretched state of slavery in which I have lived here has made me very unwilling at times to press matters when I had no means at my disposal, no reserve of power and capital, and was obliged to hope for deliverance I scarce knew how. One does not work so freely certainly when chains are rusting into every limb. Better be reproached for this, though, than for the haughtiness which, I fear, would once have been the charge, and the disregard of other people's feelings. It is easy to be symmetrical when you have full powers, but my path was fated to be like many a road, turning a corner here, making another great bend there, zig-zagging up and down and round, though I saw my point straight enough and knew the nearest cut. But this is a heavy trial. I have telegraphed at once to town to have the chapel contract returned, as I feel we must wait till Street returns, who has gone abroad for two or three weeks, before the site can be settled. After this great opposition I am not prepared to face the governors, if they are nasty, as they well can be, as they have proved again and again, with our architect not supporting me and a divided camp. In one way and another, at each successive stage, the cup has been bitter enough—still blood, more blood, before anything is done. May it be accepted.

Yet the day has not been all sorrow. A nice letter from Atlay in the morning, hoping to raise the money for the second chapel contract by getting men to advance or guarantee £100 each, on the strength of a tax of £1 per head to be put on the school for sittings, and my music master negotiations seem progressing.

Would God that the debt was off my neck, if it can be. O Lord, have mercy on me. Deliver me not into the hand of man, O Lord, for judgment and punishment, if I must be judged and punished. Mercy, oh, I pray.

*May 22nd.*—Heard from Street this morning, saying he was not going abroad for long, and would be here to-night if wanted, so I expect to-morrow to have an answer, so that we can go on at once, or if not, to have it settled very soon. Heard also from Atlay, who will guarantee £100 himself, and feels confident in getting the other guarantees. That is most cheering. We shall get our chapel up at one go.

*May 23rd.*—Nothing to write, but a sense of having much I ought to write, but I cannot put into words the perpetual presence of a weight, and of cares and prayers, hopes and fears, which swarm in my mind through the day.

*May 27th.*—A talk this morning about the theory and practice of elementary teaching, and what is the object of school-work, which I hope may bear fruit. I insisted strongly on the collecting material being the first thing, and that the necessary grind in the lower classes ought to make a boy acquire enough in a fair time, whilst as regards teaching, that too much should not be attempted, but the worst class of faults weeded out first by strong measures, others being passed over till then with mere correction, and also that it is good to have a special lesson for grammar explanations and questionings, making the other more acquisitive of material.

*Sunday, June 1st.*—A very friendly letter from the Dean of Peterborough this morning again, really very friendly. It has comforted me much. It is really the first genial recognition I have had from any one in this country, and I value it accordingly.

*June 11th.*—Money cares heavy on my heart to-night. Debt is a fearful burden, and with a younger brother's

position in a family, with no common feeling on life, but with plenty of touchy love to make them anxious, a yoke most painful—most heavy. It is *my cross.* I dare not pray for its removal, and yet I cannot bear it. O may He who alone can comfort and help.

*June 12th.*—He[1] has all the ignorance that selfish idleness can give, all the conceit that the same self-will engenders. As he is pitiable in every branch of knowledge, he assumes the moral line, and talks about justice, and does the virtuous sufferer, being rebellious and quietly impertinent to the last degree. Such a compound of ignorance, effrontery, deceit, insubordination, and oily conceit, I have seldom seen.

*August 8th.*—My brother certainly is the best fellow alive in his way, for the last night he spoke to me about my prospects here with a feeling and forbearance wonderfully tender, considering his views that it is a speculation, and his ignorance of the state of affairs. I have promised not to buy anything or borrow again (and please God will keep it faithfully) without acquainting him, which means of course to me not doing it. He says he is responsible to my other brothers for my debt. I trust God will preserve us from the trial, *but as they value my blessing, neither my wife nor children must ever accept a penny from him or the family for anything lost in this cause.* I am sure God will not let them suffer for what I have honestly done in this cause. I would not be ashamed of their receiving help of those who believed in the cause as the cause of God, but not from those who do not. We have trusted in God, *He will deliver us.* I never had so cheering a post as the one I found at home when I returned heavy-hearted. Some earnest testimony to the school which wonderfully upheld me. God is on my side. I believe I may say with the Psalmist, I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. At least I will try not to be.

*August 9th.*—How strange that with an obstinacy which can face anything there should be interwoven a sensitiveness which can face nothing. Let there be want of sympathy and tact, and any power in one of the family, and it makes me ill to have to meet it. How strange, too, is life! Men look on

[1] Of a pupil.

it as a straight path of right or wrong, whereas in its higher complications right and wrong get very doubtful in many things as higher and lower laws clash and mingle. 'Tis easy to go on in a straight path when there *have* been no false directions or wandering, but get out of the path either willfully or by being forced out, let the relations or bearings of life be as it were dislocated and out of their respective positions, be oppressed and wronged, and have the woe and the work and the struggle then. Oh, not to do any wrong amidst a tangle of such a kind! Nay, even to know which is right and which is wrong, when like David we must eat the shew-bread or die; this is what I seem to have known. . . How solemn the beginning of each half-year seems to me, both for its exceeding burden of trust and also for the fact that in these nine years none has passed without some great event or trial.

*August 14th.*—Debt very heavy on my mind, yet at last streaks of light appear, as the heavy drains on my resources get staunched and stopped, I can now look with hope to a year or so bringing me real comfort.

*August 15th.*—My want of faith is very distressing; here am I, after nine years of preservation and wonders, yet so weighed down by the weight and burden of the life, so crushed by the constant roll down of the Sisyphus stone of the world and its power on my head that I feel I fear less strong in spirit instead of more strong from all that has been done. One thing, I now know the weight; then it was only to come. I have now felt the battle, then I was but marching into it. . . . I want the patient power of a leader.

*August 28th.*—Then Atlay cheered me greatly by his helpful good sense, and he is going at once to set about trying to get security to raise £2000 for the second contract of the chapel. I felt greatly his thorough-going aid. Then in the evening I had a talk with Holden, who showed me in many ways how strong a hold the principles of the school have on some, and filled me with hope of establishing here a character for honour and truth. I was cheered to my very heart from it.

*September 12th.*—The —— match; Dr. H—— their headmaster came over; he is rather a pedagogish little man,

and starched. I was much amused by sundry masters and masters' wives insisting on the necessity of my never wearing a doctor's hat as utterly uncongenial with the spirit of this place. I too felt the anomaly. In our true, honest, every-day life-work here a mock dignity would be singularly out of place. The artificial nature of it would jar on all our habits. I certainly have been myself impressed with this, and shall never make any effort for my doctor's degree. I think, too, such old-fashioned dignities as far as they have any influence act as a drag on rising merit, so if we succeed here as we are doing, to repudiate them will be a help to any succeeding men who are making their way.

*September 21st.*—Have been taking leave of Willis, Nettleship, Anstey, and Bartholomew, and have been intensely comforted in parting by their quiet, honest goodness. I do feel the grace of God to-night in sending out these spiritual sons of mine. Anstey especially asked my judgment about his profession, and after a little talk said he wished to be a missionary, and thought his father wished it too. I had a most interesting talk with him about life, and am indeed strengthened by these visible proofs of noble purpose, so sober, so quiet and calm, but so steadfast and pure also. . . . Years of toil are repaid by these moments; clouds of doubt and sorrow clear as I see the reality of what is doing, and I cannot but glorify God.

*September 29th.*—Yesterday I went over to Kibworth. Osborn had asked me to meet F. D. Maurice, who had been taking duty in the neighbourhood, so I was tempted. Maurice is a little man with a fine head, large above and lessening to the chin, thoughtful-looking, and acute, a mixture of both, reminding me slightly in some ways of *Essays and Reviews* Williams, but looking more powerful and less gladiatorial. He talked pleasantly, but not very much, gave me the impression of observing men rather than displaying himself, withal gentle in manners and quiet, a man seemingly who had rather teach than fight, and rather fight than give way.

*October 1st.*—I spoke seriously, though very friendly, to N—— to-night about the necessity, if he is to be made præpostor, of his being thoroughly trustworthy as a helper of

the helpless, a doer of justice, and having the spirit of order and true open life. I said that something more was wanted for a præpostor than mere negative qualities, and that if I did not feel this in him I should not make him one, as would naturally be the case in about a year.

*October 5th.*—Mrs. Macmillan said this morning, that coming to church as she did with her impressions formed from college chapels, she was almost overcome to hear the singing by all here, and that she shall send every one to see, for that it is impossible without this to have any idea of the place and all its tone and character.

*October 21st.*—My teacher of carpentry came yesterday—a most intelligent, respectable-looking young fellow, quite the thing for the work; thoroughly trustworthy looking. Have been making arrangements with him to-day.

*October 26th.*—Yesterday morning I brought forward my carpentry scheme to the masters; partly to my amusement, partly to my contempt, it was very coldly received. Because!! I had not consulted them about it. There being nothing to consult about, as it was entirely my own risk and undertaking. E—— who supported it heartily, told me in the afternoon (quite unconscious of the absurdity of the whole thing) that he had told W—— "he did not see why I should not set it on foot, as I was not going to come on them for any deficit."

*November 28th.*—Had a letter from Sir Stafford Northcote himself, asking my opinion on an important educational question *qua* Eton. Wrote a long letter in reply. I do feel most grateful for the great proof this is what way the school here and its principles are making in the country. It is wonderful how God is bringing us out, and making our work here bear on unexpected ways on the great schools.

*December 2nd.*—Being stung by a sort of crawling scorpion is not the pleasantest fun when you are toiling your life out to make young scorpions respectable.

(This on receiving an impertinent letter from a parent about a very troublesome boy.)

*December 13th.*—One thing I see when any man undertakes a difficult and complicated work, he must go through it *himself;* he cannot take any man's commands, or as it is usually called "advice," or he falls. So it has been with me

all through, the "advice" and wisdom of others has been a cord round my arms and a noose on my feet, as I walked the precipice ridge, with loving but unsympathising hands pulling at it at the most dangerous places. There was I up in the fierce sun, they saw not where I was going, or what my feet were standing on, but they pulled and pulled as, bleeding and tottering, I clung to the blades of grass for life. What a type and vision of these nine years was that climb at Tenby, when alone for half an hour under a burning sun I crawled up the hill-side with rocks below, unable to go back, every inch dragging myself up over gorse with ungloved hands towards the safe height above, the only safety, but no rope at my heart pulled me back; that has been added to this. At last I reached the top quivering, bathed in sweat, broken in nerve, full of thorns, weak as a child, but safe. May God grant that ending here.

*January 8th*, 1863.—Went to Rawnsley's on Friday last and spent two very pleasant days there. Came back on Monday. Since then have had on one of my debt fits of illness and anguish; it is fearful having to drag on in this way. I find myself exceedingly involved at the present moment, though the school is, thank God, flourishing, and I am very harassed again and downhearted. It seems so endless. It is a fearful thing having to conduct a great work of this kind without capital.

What shifts has not one been reduced to! How dearly sometimes has the advance or not going back been purchased! What a load is on my head and heart! I have some hopes of making a remunerative appointment in Mr. Campbell, who came here yesterday, and impressed me very favourably. Working Cambridge. I am sick of Oxford men with their flimsy pretty ways, like weedy race-horses at best. Otherwise I have had no application for my mastership. One thing I have thus learnt, never to try and force circumstances, ὑπὲρ μόρον, but to take things as they come and act quietly, following their lead. What is this after all but practical belief in Providence? . . . . I am quite down, sick at heart, and really ill from faithlessness, anxiety, and fear. I hardly know what to pray for, and sadly enough do not feel such trust and faith as I used to. I hope it is only that my false views are more prayed away,

and simple reliance on God, rather than on what I thought God would do, is in reality mine, but it is very hard, very.

*January 21st.*—I am inexpressibly tormented, quite ill, at the thought of my debt. The want of £1000 at the present moment not only poisons all this prosperity, but almost drives me to despair. I cannot get out of it; it wraps me round like a plague mist, and yet there is no real cause for such anguish, I believe. Certainly things have been far worse for the present, and never so bright for the future. Yet prolonged pain breaks down the strongest; repeated wounds cow the bravest. Then I was fresh, however great the pain; now I am weary hearted and worn. May God strengthen me. One thing I find: I must not stay home again till I am more free. How shall I face the half-year if the holidays gnaw my vitals so fearfully!

*January 23rd.*—This afternoon's post brought me the pleasant surprise of a cheque for £50 from my father to mark his approval, he said, of my staying at home this holidays. My poor father will never know the needs of different lives, or anything about mine. How gladly would I have stayed at home often, if work and worry and care would have let me, and it is only on the last page that I have recorded the impossibility of doing it long! However the £50 is very welcome, and my father well pleased.

*January 31st.*—This evening all the boys back. I quite rejoiced at seeing the pleasant, friendly faces of my upper pupils, and at their hearty greetings. This is the pleasure of our life, that we live with them and they with us in so kindly a way. I do feel cheered and strengthened at finding myself amongst them again. Certainly if being liberal and true has brought much pain in some ways, it is an exceeding great reward in all things pertaining to life. Θεῷ δόξα.

*February 1st.*—I have been reading to-night one of those refreshing little story books which from time to time keep my feelings clear and simple and nerve me for life, a book my mother has sent to little Margaret, edited by Mrs Gatty, seemingly by a child of hers, at least the initials make me think so. . . .

Finished arranging the class-work to-day. To-morrow we discuss the subjects, and how to arrange them so as to play

into each other's hands best. I have felt a very great confidence and happiness in this week's council, in the intelligent, quiet, united way in which we have managed all our work, so different from the galvanised, crude fancies and conceit of former times, when sundry thought they could not warm their hands unless they set the house a-fire.

*February 9th.*—It serves me right; I almost murmured against God when I could not bring them here, as it seemed. I forced circumstances to do so, and my resolute self-will was allowed to have its way, and made the knotted whip to give me my due reward and lash my heart on its two tenderest points, its affection, and its zeal for the school morale. O Lord, I confess my sin.

*February 22nd.*—(Of a master). Certainly nice manners and courtesy are of much value, much more value than I used to think. In the wear and tear of life how much is spared by a little oil. . . . How thankful I am for to-day's rest! Sometimes in the pauses of this great work I feel so doubtful of myself and all my heart and work that I seem as if it could not go on. There is such a vague shrinking in the midst of so many cares and so much abuse and opposition, that I hardly know what to do, but then the necessity for action begins again and the feeling goes.

*February 23rd.*—I sometimes think this record will seem a strange querulous sort of affair, but nevertheless in a journey the heat and fly-stings are very serious, and what I feel to be the burden of my life is just the unnecessary bloodsucking of these absurd but deadly little jealousies, tempers, and perpetual baitings; and the less because it is so unnecessary, and without any real claim to rivalry to support it all. What is done and the success by and by will want no history, but I cannot but think that the difficulties and vexations that have secretly hindered and embittered the work may prove no useless knowledge to true workers, even if it be in their judgment only the record of my own shortcomings and inefficiency. For the success of a great work becomes all the more valuable as an example when it seems to be God's blessing on the true effort, rather than any out of the way excellence in the human instruments.

*February 25th.*—The Sixth Form are thinking of starting

a magazine in the school. I shall encourage it. Anything which gives life and occupation is good.

*March 12th.*—A—— (who has not been at all satisfactory here) came to see me, and with many tears confessed that he had been having help in his verses given him, and that he could not bear to go on doing wrong in this way any longer. I had some nice talk with him and comforted him about the future, and after praying with him a short prayer, and telling him to begin and end the day with the same sort of short special prayer for help, sent him away much relieved in heart. But these are the blessed glimpses God sometimes vouchsafes us of truth working and leavening, lifting up the veil a moment to show us the secrets of inner life, and that it is not in vain that we struggle and strive for truth. To think of a little boy, voluntarily, in no row, but quite unsuspected and unaccused, coming of his own accord to the headmaster to get the painful burden of a secret dishonesty, which in most schools is considered nothing, and of necessity is made to exist, to get this off his mind and to be comforted and seek help and advice! It is a glorious reward. This is indeed the impression I have wished to give the boys: of one ready to help, and gentle to comfort the earnest, however clothed in power and obliged to use it often. Thank God, they do think this of me—those who are in need and can come to me for sympathy.

*March 13th.*—I now see what has puzzled me, why despotic rulers so persistently and seemingly madly resist and struggle against popular reforms. No man who is responsible can stand the pettiness and selfish folly of semi-responsible advisers. There is no medium. Such a ruler must either be like our Queen, relieved of almost all responsibility, or he must be despotic. To be responsible and have to yield and veer about with the semi-responsible and officious, no living being could stand.

*April 3rd.*—How much I feel at these periods [a pupil was seriously ill] the reward of true work. I do not fear meeting our pupils before the Judge.

*April 9th.*—I should like to carry out my theory of teaching more perfectly, but that, excepting in enumerating general principles, I have not succeeded in establishing as I hoped.

The men are not trained enough to appreciate fully either my views or the rules of obedience. So I am obliged to leave them to do what they can, and to be satisfied with a fair graduation of subjects and fair uniformity in the general plan. A really well-taught upper class school, where all classes are being worked on a graduated scale of teaching as well as of subjects, is the work of another generation. I should like to give some lectures on teaching, but then probably all the masters think they know as much about it or more than I do. I should make little by that move. No, another generation must see true teaching set on foot throughout a school. It is no use seeing truth with no instruments for practising truth.

*April 21st.*— . . . One of the governors, in the course of this discussion, said "it was a mere money speculation of ours;" I turned full on him and begged to contradict him most emphatically, and to assure him that I knew at the beginning, as I know now, that it would never answer me at all events half so well as getting rich on the old system without risk. "Then," quoth he "you did it for nothing." "No," I answered, "I believe in education, and the greatness of the work in supplying education in a country which needs it as much as ours does. And I was ready to stake my life then on doing it, and I am ready now. I admit," I said, "times have been when the magnitude of the undertaking has made me feel very weary hearted and weighed heavily upon me, but not now, gentlemen, not now, now we have succeeded. Even if I was ruined there are those gone forth who will never forget the system they have been under; the seed is sown. I have no anxiety now." Mr. Finch said certainly as to the κῦδος I might be satisfied; I had enough of that. I said I cared for the work, that it was no money speculation. In the course of the discussion, they said their successors might bless them (curse) for the repairs of these large buildings. I said I was prepared to stand the judgment of posterity as well as they . . . It was a sharpish encounter; I can give but a brief though pretty correct epitome of it. One thing I rejoice especially at: the having borne witness before them with all my might that it was no money speculation, but an anxious desire to serve God. Whether they will hear or whether they will forbear, they have got it,

and cannot repeat their calumny honourably again. I sincerely rejoice, and on the whole feel that I have borne good testimony on this day. But only to think of a body of English gentlemen venturing to assert openly that their successors would curse them because of the *repairs* needed for our noble buildings. They said also their successors!! might object to the largeness of the school. *Proh pudor!* What is the good of talking, what can argument avail, what impression can truth make on men who argue that their successors may curse them because of having to *keep in repair* the noble buildings *we build.*

*May 8th.*—The whole holiday for the school reaching 200. I spoke a few emphatic words yesterday—very few—telling them just to ask the question of themselves, "What has made us great? Truth and liberty."

The schoolroom which had been the outcome of so much anxious thought and work was opened on June 18th of this year (1863). Thring's speech on the occasion remains to illustrate the ends he kept in view, and how steadily he held to them:—

I know not what may be the feelings of the great company that has met together here to-day in this noble building. That a power has been at work in this place all must see. These buildings are its outward sign; your presence here a testimony and a homage to it. We claim that testimony—that homage—distinctly and boldly as given to the cause of truth and true work—to that and to nothing else. This is the magic that in spite of all difficulties is doing what you see. No one can know the might of true work and faith in it till he tries. It is not genius,—it is work and faith that prevails. Perhaps some may think that if I chose I could tell an exciting story. It may be so. But this I know—the story of our life here is very simple and as prosaic as it well can be. An earnest desire to work out truth and faith in truth against any odds; a belief that the young need not be false—that is all. My colleagues and myself felt sure that to educate without machinery for educating was a sham, and

that the result would be a sham and all false. Acting on this belief we began, and the rest of our life has mainly been one long series of laborious, commonplace days. Ten years ago, —just ten—this noble old foundation counted its twenty-five boarders and one house. You see to-day what a clear sense of honest work and patience can do with scarcely any external aid, and none of the glitter that usually dazzles mankind. . . .

Something also I would say to the school on the subject of school greatness. I have observed lately no unnatural desire to claim a position among English schools. Now you cannot claim it. It must come. Indeed we are very far from wishing that the school should come forward on the false ground of mere increase of numbers—which may be an increase of shame, for a mob is not an army—or of mere identity with other schools, which is not what has made us what we are. Yet be sure there is the means here of being great. Have you so soon forgotten the motto in your head room—

> Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,—
> These three alone lead life to sovereign power.

Yes, power must come, and there are two ways for it to come. Most of all, and first, the winning a character for truth and true honour. Most of all, that no lie in word or deed, no shams, no underhand deceits shall harbour here—nothing that will not bear the light. Let this be the school character, as I trust it is, and fear not, the school *is* great.

And, secondly, though it is but an offshoot of this—the winning character for scholarship. There must be true, earnest, untiring work, and appreciation of work, renown for scholarship, and every one caring for that renown. Now we have had much individual excellence and much success, but it is idle to expect that there can be enthusiastic power, the tenacious grasp, the bull-dog perseverance, the eager grudging every moment as lost which is not clearly gained, the racer elasticity that belongs to a truly great school, if all from the lowest to the highest do not hang on the reputation of their champions, and kindle in them living power by the consciousness of all eyes being fixed on them. No school

will reach its full stature till this universal feeling exists; no amount of deader work will make up for the loss of this living fountain of life and energy. Be then great, and fill out with daily growing power this fair temple of learning in which we are. Show yourselves worthy of it. . . .

Who shall set a limit to the power that goes forth from here—those generations that so quickly pass out into the great English empire as a band of brothers? Who shall stop it? It will grow and grow, and be a witness in all lands. When we look back a little and remember that a few years ago no language would have been thought too scornful to deride the possibility of what to-day is our reality, why should we doubt what is yet to come? Why should the prophecy of the little that remains be thought a vain dream—the prophecy that a few years yet onwards, and by God's blessing, when men think of their youth, and talk one with another of truth and honour and steadfast work, the name of the school shall rise readily to their lips, and deeds of patient endurance and a character hardly won for quiet, unassuming trustworthiness, shall fill with honest pride the hearts of those who then shall be able to say, "and I too was at Uppingham. Nothing is too great for the power of truth."

*August 19th.*—S—— came to-day with his boy. I had a very nice talk with him. All the S——s are good fellows. It is curious to see the bigotry of Eton men—somewhat touching also. He told me worse stories of his Eton experience than my own. Believed also the school was worse now than when we were there, and yet would have sent his son there as a matter of course could he have afforded it.

*August 24th.*—Yesterday, to my great surprise, I received a letter from my dear father, saying it had occurred to him I might have a balance against me at my banker's, in consequence of the setting the school on foot with so many masters, and that if so he would help me to the uttermost of his power. I do feel it such a blessing to see his love thus coming out now he is so aged, and I have so prayed to be delivered from debt, and also to have my father's and mother's love and sympathy in this matter. I have written a letter expressing my great gratitude, stating that it is not a necessity,

but would be an immense relief and sunshine to me, but that if it cannot be given in trust in the blessing that has been on the work here I could not take it. I have borne testimony to the motives which God put into my heart to begin this work with, that I cannot repent of it, and that they must not help me under false motives in this, and I have tried to show how much I loved and honoured them. God grant the prayer of my life may be somewhat granted, and a little real communion be ours even on this side the grave. I do so love and honour my father and mother, and yet have had a life so different that it was difficult in any way to meet on any common ground. Now at last may God bless this and put it into our hearts to have this union. But God be praised for the letter itself, even if nothing more comes of it.

*August 30th.*—God be praised for Sundays. I have had a little time to-day to collect my thoughts, and feel my heart strengthened by recalling great realities of God and truth, and what life really is, instead of standing at bay against incessant work and no less incessant care, till I can think of nothing else.

*August 31st.*—A letter from T—— to-day full of congratulations about my having been practically offered Charter-house in the holidays, which evidently pleased my father much. . . . I felt particular satisfaction in my father and mother caring for this, to me, very trifling event. It is valuable as serving somewhat as a stepping-stone to them to arrive at what is going on here and the importance of the work.

*September 1st.*—Much comforted by a letter from my mother. My father was greatly pleased with my letter, and will send me a present of £100, and if I wish it will apply to his trustees to let me have some capital. My dear father, what a great thing this is. I do so rejoice at the pleasure my telling him about Charter-house gave them, and also at his being now satisfied with my work in spite of my not having made money. I would not for the world give him the trouble and anxiety of applying to his trustees.

*September 10th.*—I have been dinning into the masters again the two great principles of constant communication with one another about teaching, but if not that, the para-

mount necessity of each master fastening tenaciously on common faults in class-work, and destroying them out of his class before dealing in the same way with others.

*September 12th.*—What rot diaries are. Here have I been all day in a strange dream of sadness and self-probing, and faith and faithlessness, and external trouble and internal weakness, mixed up with defiant thoughts, and then a feeling of bursting away from all things if it were possible to get rid in ascetic toil of the cares and anxieties of more complicated life as it is. I know why men turned ascetics; they were too cowardly to face the world as Christian men moving in it. I woke with the dull consciousness now so often mine of a weight, much work and no joy, for the day. I did my school work, which has the virtue of being a quasi-asceticism, abstracting my heart from self-eating by the feeling of something done.

*October 11th.*—Heard this morning that Cornish has got an exhibition of £60 at Exeter.

*October 14th.*—I heard to-day of the sad accident of old General Johnson. He has fallen down and seriously injured or broken his leg. The old man, however, when he found this, would not rest till he had made Mrs. Johnson write at his dictation what he wished to be done at this audit, which he actually had intended to be at before this happened. All honour to the brave old man who has year by year from the very beginning done his best for the school and its improvements. Without him we should have been almost powerless, and the discouragement arising from the rest would have almost crushed us.

*October 15th.*—The audit day is always very disagreeable, as they never have the courtesy to tell one whether they have anything to say or not, so I am always kept hanging about till they go. The associations also of the day are very unpleasant. We have entered, I believe, fifty-two boys this half-year. . . .

*October 18th.*—Parsons has won a demyship at Magdalen with more than fifty candidates.

*October 27th.*—Heard of General Johnson's death to-day. He has been a hearty, true friend, and worthy of all honour from us. What we should have done without him I don't

know, with that cold and hostile phalanx of wishers of evil and prophesiers of evil trying to fulfil their own prophecies. But his presence and support cheered us in work, and gave us the means of expressing our opinion. *Requiescat in pace.*

*November 5th.*—M—— reminded me to-day of our first beginning of the choir—six boys in a little room behind the hall, and now—the new schoolroom and half a hundred. How little the masters realise these things, or what it was to face the world then, to conceive the plan, and work it through! How nothing but the immediate gift of God could have supplied the conception and the strength to work it. It is like a wonderful dream.

*November 18th.*—A day of darkness. My cousin Arthur this morning sent me a kind note requiring the payment of the £1000 he lent me some years ago, giving me two periods for £500 each, the first next February, the second February year. I don't know where to get the money, and once more am tortured in the burning net of debt. Nettleship starts for Balliol to-morrow. He will do well, I think. I had the nicest talk with him to-night on art and literature that I have had with any boy for a long time, when we went into the drawing-room for tea. I was surprised at his asking questions and making suggestions. He is so reticent generally. But he evidently was greatly interested. And it was a real pleasure to me and a great refreshment talking to him in that way.

*November 29th.*—Altogether to-night I feel more comforted by God than for a long time. How I smile at the feelings at the end of my curate time, when having fairly mastered my limited range of temptations by God's grace, I thought that nothing more could move me, so serenely it seemed could I face the great evils, as they are thought. And now I am like a reed. How absurd the judgment of man would be! If my first I judged my second I what a calm pity he would bestow on the weaker character, when in reality I am a veteran in mind and soul endurance now compared with then. But such are circumstances and judgments.

*November 30th.*—Nettleship returned from Balliol, having been fifth, and had in by the examiners, and a hope expressed

he would come again next year. This is a great feather in my cap, as he is very young, and it will inspirit school and masters greatly.

*December 1st.*—This afternoon received a letter from the Master of Balliol, speaking of Nettleship having passed a very good examination indeed, and offering him rooms, which I had the pleasure of passing on to my father and mother at Weymouth.

*January 5th*, 1864.—To-day I actually began to put in hand in a small way a book[1] on education which Dr. Beale started me up to doing in some degree, though it has flitted before my mind before.

*January 17th.*—I certainly have been happier this holidays than I have been since I came here. . . . The sense of having got on a truer footing with my father and the family is very soothing. There is no more mean concealment, and my dear father has softened, and been able to trust me and feel for the work here.

*March 23rd.*—I made a statement of what had been done about the chapel, and proposed that those masters who choose should each be security for £250, but not liable for any more. Five agreed to this as well as myself, and I have written to Burton accordingly with the absolute certainty now of being able to go on with the work. All passed off in the quietest way.

*April 3rd.*—The first proofs of my book came to-day. I wish it was well over. I am curiously drawn in different directions. My lifelong feeling, my belief and wishes, as well as my personal desire for credit, all make me greatly interested in the book, whilst on the other hand, the fear of strife and criticism, and the longing to be undisturbed, all makes me dread its coming out. I must say, though, on the whole, the interest greatly predominates. It seems to me such a doing battle for right, and such a bringing out my life-work into the front ranks of this busy world. May God bless it.

*April 8th.*—Put the last touch to my preface to-night. What makes me have hopes of the book is that in one way or another the results of all my thought and all my work most curiously come into play in it in one place or another,

[1] *Education and School.*

which makes me think that God is allowing my life to speak, and as He has blessed my life here will in like manner bless this fruit of my life.

*May 13th.*—(Of his brother Godfrey.) Let not his faith in the truth of this work and Thy blessing be shaken. For in good and evil report he has believed in the wisdom of doing good here, and hoped against hope that the end would show who was right, and that blessing would be on honest work and self-sacrifice. I thank Thee, O God, for having given me the comfort of his faith.

*May 23rd.*—I was thinking this day what a fearful ten years I have spent here and am likely to spend seemingly, but strange to say, on honestly questioning my inner heart whether I would change this hard and bleeding life with its feelings and its truth for a softer one with less heart treasure gained, my heart boldly answered No; boldly and decidedly took the pains, and let go the easier lot. I was myself astonished at the strength of the feeling.

*May 29th.*—This morning at 8.30 we signed the two deeds for the money for the chapel, and received £1700. So now the chapel really is once more on foot I shall be very thankful to see it finished.

*May 30th.*—I write this at times that my children may know this much, what a struggle life has been here, and that work and patience under God are the only powers.

*June 8th.*—Gave out the præpostors' holiday this morning. Made a satisfactory speech. When they cheered at the announcement I told them they might well cheer, as it embodied more than anything else our principle of life, that good was enjoyment and enjoyment good. Next we appealed to a national feeling of ambition, which was the same that made a man proud of his family or his country—the ambition of being renowned for maintaining law and right, not for being traitors to it. That every half-year gave me less to say, and every half-year a true feeling that sneaking is sunk lower and lower in the school and reached lower strata. That we ought to care for the school as we do for our country. . . . We had not now to coin a character and a name, but we had a character and a name we ought to uphold and raise higher. It was easy comparatively to be renowned for university

distinction (though we were not as yet as we should be), but a character and name for truth and high tone was of slower growth, but lasting, belonging to all, not the work of a few. I trusted we should all strive so that no one should be ashamed of the name of Uppingham. These were the main topics. . . . I hope this will tell.

*June 17th.*—Another letter also from G—— scarcely less pleasant, saying he was so impressed with the improvement of his son who came from Eton here, that he has determined to send his next son, whom he fully intended for Eton. Such a convert from conviction, an old Eton man, an Eton believer, and a man of position and rank as a barrister, is very satisfactory.

*June 24th.*—In the morning Mr. S——, a Manchester merchant, who has had a son here three years, but now leaving, came to me in the most feeling way, and said he felt it a simple duty to do what he could for the school, that all he could do was to give money, if I would but tell him how he could best dispose of it. I thanked him very much and asked him to consider, indeed I felt the manner of his acknowledgment deeply. At the recitation I saw him, and said I should like anything he gave to go to a general fund for carrying out our plans, if he would allow me to announce it. He at once gave £100, which I was accordingly able to give out in my speech; he said, too, he hoped to give something again. This is a great light and encouragement, opening up a source of power which I trust will do much as time goes on, but above all cheering me immensely from the way in which it was done.

*August 21st.*—Little F——, who has been here a year or so, on getting moved up into a higher class, rushed home after school to his house, knocked at the drawing-room door, and ran in, and finding Mrs. R—— on the sofa, kissed her twice, and told her the good news. A touching little bit of school life.

*August 31st.*—Yesterday the match with Mr. Finch's eleven. I never saw our boys play worse, half of them don't try, and have no spirit. That annoys me. There is no doubt, I fear, that the hard, rough life we led at school, whilst very harmful in all the finer feeling, did in many instances produce vigour.

*October* 10*th.*—Took leave of —— to-night. Am greatly pleased with him; he has been an honest, manly fellow, and I am proud of his taking those feelings from the school. He said he could not do much in classics and work, but he hoped to represent the truth and manliness of the school, which was the great thing. I told him that indeed it was, and that I had as great an affection and respect for him on that account as if he could get the Balliol.

*October* 14*th.*—De Winton's report in; speaks highly of my division; says Nettleship's Greek prose was the best of its kind he ever looked over.

*November* 1*st.*—A splendid essay from Nettleship. I hope he and some of my pupils in years to come will play a great part in upholding God's truth.

*November* 6*th.*—Another boy entered yesterday. A great weight off my mind not having perpetual anxiety about entries. God be thanked for this. It is very cheering in reviewing the past to see and feel how purely an instrument I have been; how all the good work has been His, and how invariably any mere human devices for good or evil have come to nothing. God's guiding hand bringing the things to pass.

*November* 11*th.*—G—— back to-day. We have discovered a nice knot of aiders and abettors in the two houses who subscribed for his running away, all of whom I shall flog to-morrow.

*November* 12*th.*—An eventful day over. This morning at ten, when we all assembled, I flogged G—— in presence of the school, and after I had done so, made a speech to the school on the far worse case of the boys who helped and subscribed for him to run away, and flogged them each soundly one by one. Witts this afternoon told me my speech was very impressive, and brought the tears into his eyes once or twice, and that he never saw boys look so solemn and attentive. I cannot but think it one more of the great days of the school. Before we have always had to do with principals, with whom there is always some slight lurking feeling of sympathy, but to-day we caught the scamps who keep behind, and wish well to evil, and talk big, but keep out of harm's reach usually. To have come down on the supporters of evil is a wonderfully telling thing.

*November 18th.*—I sent Nettleship off to Oxford this morning not without prayers on my part. . . . I saw him last night and told him not to be too anxious; that life was long and scholarships short, and that in one sense, and that the best, I really did not care whether he won or not, only let him continue to do his best.

*November 21st.*—A great day over—a day of blessing, I hope. The bishop this morning confirmed 56 boys for us. The whole school attended, and the service was very quiet and impressive. The bishop gave a most earnest address to the boys, pressing on them with much power truths they have heard from us. I have been very comforted by the bishop's visit as well as by Mr. Osborne's, who preached yesterday for us. For the first time something of the exceeding desolation and solitary feeling which has been so hard to bear has passed away, as now we are getting friendly help in the neighbourhood. The bishop said he should try with the Bishop of Oxford to get a private bill passed to enable us to consecrate our chapel; only think of that! I asked him to preach at the opening, and he has consented. In every way he is eager to help us, and he strikes me as genuine.

*November 25th.*—To-day most unexpectedly by the afternoon's post received the news that Nettleship had got the first Balliol scholarship. There were three to be given away. A most pleasant letter from Rawnsley giving some particulars.

*November 27th.*—The first Communion; about 120 boys attended, a happy scene of peace and trust. Recommended Nettleship's victory and myself to God.

*December 2nd.*—Witts gave a breakfast to the Upper Sixth in honour of Nettleship this morning. The bishop sends his son here at midsummer; how this would have cheered me once, but now we are getting on so well that the double signs of prosperity are beginning with me, viz. that it takes great things to please me, and that one can afford to be vexed by little things.

*December 5th.*—For the first time these eleven years the end of this half-year sees me with no great care, and able in some degree to be at ease. It is a strange feeling; I keep expecting that something must come. Yet there is much

debt still, but the school is so prosperous, and no *draws* now on my income coming, that my heart is fairly at rest. Neither is there any childish nonsense amongst the masters any more. The days of nursery rebellions seem past.

*December 28th.*—This holiday for the first time now in eleven years; no great weight of care, danger, and pain is on me; God be praised. The first time. I feel so peaceful. The papers for the New Commission on Schools reached me on Saturday. The governors have to send in their accounts for me to forward. What a turning of the tables as a beginning! Last night a sort of new world opened to me in my prayers as the conviction that to be humble, patient, and true was the highest earthly lot, came home to me in a way it had never done before. We had the Union children yesterday to their annual feast. A very pleasant afternoon.

*January 13th*, 1865.—J. H. Green been here about building a 15 house. I put before him in the strongest possible way, that whilst I allowed him to do it I should not consider myself in the least tied as headmaster by his doing so, and if I ever had to sit in judgment on him as a master, should not let it have the slighest weight in my decision. He must do it entirely on his own responsibility.

*February 2nd.*—I feel less a coward to-night, but awe-struck at the coming time; yet how blessed is my home! I do believe a happier home is not to be found. This is a great support. All the cares, however bitter or deadly, are *outside.*

*February 6th.*—I paid on Tuesday £521 : 18 : 9, the remainder of the £1000 Arthur Hobhouse lent me. Thank God for this.

*March 5th.*—Life is certainly at very high pressure with me; even in the holidays I am very little free. Many ties as well as want of money fetter my movements. My work has to be done with a thumb and finger; my annoyances and distractions with a hand and three-quarters; my pleasures to be taken by fits and snatches; my bores by the daily bushel. I get quite puzzled as to the moral effect of all this. For self-conscious culture it is decidedly unfavourable, but how far the unconscious character is shaped for good whilst one thinks one is simply being banged about, is as unknown to

the man himself as the same sort of thing must be to the wool which is flung in at one end of a machine, carded, torn, worried, washed, entangled, disentangled, pulled, squeezed, thumped in the darkness, and comes out cloth at the other end. I hope this is so. I feel in some sort it is, but I think I should like more time to ponder my ways, try and mend them, reflect and work. Incessant carding may be good, but it is certainly unpleasant.

*March 16th.*—The entry is getting wonderful, 14 already for Easter, and 18 for Midsummer. We shall be crammed.

*April 11th.*—To-night the quarter is virtually over, the happiest I have spent for these eleven years. Not that there have not been many cares, but still I find the whole impression has been of happy work, no quarrelling, and no gnawing heartsore going on. I cannot help admitting that on the whole I have spent a happy time.

*April 21st.*—The chapel is beginning to look finished. We have been anxious about some things, but the pulpit, our last great anxiety, has come to-day, and though there is some talk about there not being time to put it up, they will manage it, I think. Street was here to-day. He is evidently greatly pleased with his work here, both in the result and because I have trusted the whole management to him. I assured him I thought he had carried out my idea as near perfection as might be. . . . It never seems to strike men that able workers who devote their lives to subjects ought to be trusted, and produce better work if trusted. I am sure the having put the work unhesitatingly in Street's hands has had much to do with its great excellence.

*April 25th.*—The audit day. Showed in numbers, 282, 274 boarders. A 1st Balliol scholarship and the 1st Trinity scholarship at Oxford. Not a word from any of them. . . . A schoolmaster never wants a slave in his triumphal car to tell him he is mortal.

The school chapel, the outcome of six years of anxious thought and work, was consecrated on 27th April.

*May 1st.*—(After speaking of the ceremonial and the

speeches). . . . A glorious day. . . . We have now cast behind us much of the petty annoyances of our earlier life here. Yet it was most curious to remark amidst the general admiration and high encomiums passed, the total ignorance of our real work, objects, hopes, and success. Curious and not encouraging. . . . I can scarcely credit the having the chapel at last, and the escape from the hurry and discomfort of our unwelcome occupation of the church. Now a new epoch begins. Θεῷ δόξα.

*May 7th.*—It all seems like a dream. The chapel and our present life with its comparative calm. I sometimes think I am not half thankful enough (which no doubt is true), but the fact is I don't half realise it all. It is like a dream, and not least the absence of jaws, the peace and smoothness of working. The old life was a nightmare, as irrational as useless and grotesque, in which one was constantly finding one's self, as it were, in the drawing-room in one's nightgown, or any other nightmare incongruity; such was the absurd imputation of motives to me and the absurd eccentricity of self-will in them; such a confounding of all the relations of ordinary life that went on daily. Now all is changed, and the calm is as strange as the turmoil.

*May 30th.*—It is curious what idolatry of land and game there is in England. A man may be excellent, religious, genial, sympathising, anything, but if he is a landowner, and you have not tried him on land and game, you know nothing of him. . . . "Scratch a squire" and you get to clay at once.

*August 16th.*—Took leave of the ——; of the elder with pleasure and praise, of the younger with words of solemn warning on his half-hearted work and life. Clever, ambitious, and keenly alive to praise, he is too unstable and selfish to excel.

*August 18th.*—I was writing my sermon to-night in good heart when in comes ——, and tells me he is sure he cannot do the work, and he must go. He is, of course, a very good fellow for telling me this, and I like him for it, and am all the more sorry to lose him and her, not to mention the perplexity I am in about the class. . . . After church went and had a long talk with them. I feel sure if he would fasten to the work with a lower class he would do it and be happy enough.

I set all I could before him, and he will give me an answer to-morrow. I think he will go, but the more I see of them the more sorry I feel that they should go, as they are very superior people, and would introduce much life into the school.

*August 29th.*—Gave a holiday to the school on the occasion of reaching 300. Old boys' match. The school was beaten easily, but the team against us was very strong. . . . A letter from C. E. Green to the E——s in great glee; he had bowled out the Rugby eleven for twenty-eight runs. He was the captain they sent the insolent message to, offering to send a house eleven to play us. This had stuck in his mind ever since, and now he had wiped it off.

*September 1st.*—Got in my banking book to-day for the first time for many years without trembling and sickness of heart, though there is much arrears yet to bring up. . . .

*September 3rd.*—Had a most unpleasant argument with R—— at the end of the term about the raised terms, or rather about a claim he makes to tax the day boys towards paying for extra masters. It has pained me a good deal, not for the money involved, but as showing how deep set the difficulties of carrying on the school are, and how suicidal masters would be in their claims and policy if they had a chance by my removal, which may God avert; at least I pray heartily He may bless this school, and not let it be pulled to pieces, Actaeon like. I pointed out to him that I received my appointment here to day boys and boarders alike, that when I chose to enlarge the system each master came on his own contract, and if I did not infringe that, *in justice* could claim no more. That to this hour I was paying perpetual guarantees, and they in the enjoyment of the results without any acknowledgment on their part. That the foundation did not pay me, but gave the means of getting boarders, and that they supplied the funds for carrying on the school. Altogether it was a painful affair, the sting of which remains. . . . But I will not brood over evils that may never come.

*September 4th.*—A memorable day. This morning I spoke *very strongly* to the school on the disgraceful affair on Friday, on impurity in word, thought, or deed, and lastly, on the fact that our liberties here and pleasant life depended on truth, and that whether they liked it or not, they must choose whether they

would support us and the good amongst themselves or the felons. And then I cut off the holiday. I had not been long home when I heard a noise of voices in the passage, and found a deputation had come with our "Charter." I said at ten o'clock in the face of the school, when I should read it out and demand whether they would abide by it, and then they should claim, as I had promised, the remission of the punishment. The culprit, though, must be given up. So at ten o'clock they came. I read out each head, and asked to each, "Do you abide by this?" and to each came back a full answer, "Yes, we do." Then I remitted the punishment, and spoke on the living power of such a profession of truth. It is a glorious thing. The most glorious thing that has ever happened in a school. Thank God for it. Now we have the whole school appealing to their love of truth as a charter, and the charter itself established in their minds as the deliverer from shame and punishment. It is a glorious thing, a happy, memorable day.

*September 5th.*—The sound of the "*Yes, we do,*" as the school assented to their charter, still rings in my heart and makes pleasant music there, recurring often when I am not full of other things. . . . To-day the masters played the school. I got a 0, and 37 was our whole score, but we rather collared them after, and got them all out for 87. It was good fun. It is a wonderful proof of our substantial unity that masters and boys can thus contend as two sides. It is something to be able to play with them, but far beyond that, to be able to play against them. . . . I do feel so happy in the state of the school, its public profession of faith. It makes me feel so among friends, and that God has blessed it.

*September 21st.*—Have just been taking leave of my boys. Nettleship especially; I felt much the parting. His honest success has wonderfully consolidated the school, and lifted a never ceasing weight of care off my own mind. Now for my new division and another spell of work.

*October 2nd.*—Heard to-day of poor Blyth's death. He begged to be remembered to me in his last hours. One of the greatest comforts I have felt in the trying work here has been the feeling of union hereafter with our dead. Not fearing to see them in that other world, but longing rather to

be there with them. Will they not meet us? and be our teachers in the new glories which they first have entered on? Surely hereafter we shall be full of happy communion.

*October 4th.*—D'Orsay finished to-night a particularly successful three days of English work. Great good has been done in the school. They are much enlivened and inspirited, a new idea of literature, a new world open in glimpses before them, and above all our common talk and life is shown to be instinct with secret power if we will but stretch out our hands for it. *The school is quite full.* I filled the last vacancy to-day. And yet such is common success that I almost forgot to note this great external fact.

*October 9th.*—I am quite getting back my old elastic working power now the awful strain of anxiety and jaw is gone. I am reading *Cæsar* and *Chaucer*, besides writing exercises occasionally, and can really take interest in the actual work, as I am not overwhelmed by other cares and heart-tearings. . . .

*October 12th.*—A sad day for one thing. Baverstock, my old and valued friend, has sent in his resignation and goes at Christmas. Though long expected, like all long expected things it has come suddenly at last,—this, the first break in the band of true workers here. It is like cutting off a piece of myself, warning me, too, for it is really death that is separating us, that I too am drawing nearer to my goal,—one more of my generation passing, not prematurely, but in his appointed time, a friend of my youth departing. O God, have mercy and help us in Thy hand. It is a great grief.

*October 15th.*—After dinner Mr. Lyttelton came in, and after church walked out with me and M——. He argued in such an off-hand way on school matters. . . . I was rather amused than disgusted, as his assumption was not personal, but only general and worldly-wise fashion. My experience and that of all the masters was nothing to an abstract objection. Every word he said implied that we were nobodies and our work nothing, yet withal there was so much friendliness in the man and absence of desire to glorify himself specially at my expense that I rather liked him, indeed, liked him much. It is a good thing too. He evidently came full of bottled-up talk and criticism and

arguments on the size of classes—*the* bitter pill for the old schools to swallow, and which is open to much talk, and now I know the sort of thing that will be said beforehand, and have learned their tricks of fence.

*October 19th.*—A confirmation class in the evening. . . . Confirmation class is very refreshing to me, bringing me and my boys in such close communion.

*October 20th.*—To-day I filled up the last vacancy in my house for next October, this time year. When I remember the event every application used to be, it is like a dream.

*November 3rd.*—Preached yesterday on almsgiving. The offertory in the morning most unsatisfactory from the little given by the masters. How men expect boys to give liberally when they don't I can't understand. I had the gratification, though, of sending £60 to India, the first worthy offering as a school we have made. I trust it will be a great living power in the school, as boys see the reality of the help they can give.

*November 12th.*—A glorious day, like King Josiah's passover; at least 160 voluntary communicants from the school, a most thrilling sight and service. Thank God. All went off well yesterday; 80 confirmed. The bishop made two good addresses, and the boys looked very nice. Two hard days over. . . . Have had a summons to London on Tuesday to be examined by the Schools' Committee. I detest it. My work is broken in on, which I hate. I hate the travelling. I don't believe in committees. To be sure they assume they wish to know, but then one is to have the work and harvest of a toilsome life curiously handled and appraised by a wise, authoritative inexperience. . . . What a fool I am, too, to be making grievances and drawing ink sketches on the evening of this glorious day of hopes fulfilled, and grace given, and assured blessing.

*November 15th.*—Back from London, on the whole immensely gratified with my examination. All the main points and principles I care for were well brought out; but more than this, the Commission are going to recommend to Parliament my plan (they don't call it mine) of a few schools for the University, preparatory schools with exhibitions to them, and all the small endowments to be clubbed into

making boarding-schools for farmers, etc., and Uppingham, apparently, is to be the example which is to prove the practicability of this. I was complimented afterwards on my evidence, and sundry of them gathered round to talk.

*November 16th.*—A perpetual feeling of a new world rolling into sight for schools, and of our work here being sanctified and blessed beyond my dreams,—so strange does it seem to my mind to find my long-cherished scheme for English schools going to be brought into Parliament, and pushed with power.

*November 17th.*—Whenever not occupied with other things the thought of this great miracle and wonder of my old dream being endued with vitality, and likely to become law all over England, floats into my mind. It is so strange, so marvellous, that the deepest ancient abuses and customs should thus give way. . . .

*November 29th.*—My birthday, 44 years old. . . . A busy day in various ways. The boys of my house gave me two very handsome volumes as a birthday present. I have thanked them, telling them my true reward will be in their lives, in their true work, in their honest devotion to the cause in which I have staked so much. Gave out the præpostors' prize this morning. Made a speech, expressing my conviction of the progress of true principles in the school, that they get wider and deeper, and that though I suppose we must have fools and beasts sometimes, that they are less and less worshipped, that there is less "donkey worship." I gradually got my speech round to this phrase, and I think have settled for a season the mock heroes. . . .

*December 12th.*—Walter Cornish here; gives an excellent account of our Oxford men, and says Conington considers Nettleship the second best undergraduate in the whole University for knowledge.

*December 29th.*—I have been engaged, and am still, in carving four medallions, likenesses of the children, for M——'s workbox. They promise well. I quite accidentally discovered I might be able to do it owing to having wasted some work on a bit of wood I then found out had been broken, and whilst the other bit was getting ready, trying a profile of Margaret on it with some success.

*January 21st*, 1866.—Returned from Weymouth straight yesterday on receipt of a telegram that my dear friend Baverstock had died on Friday at one o'clock about; most unexpectedly, to me at least, though I had long given up all hope. He passed away most peacefully, and without pain, observing with a smile a minute or two before his departure, as he saw the anxious looks of those about him, "I do not feel ill." Dear Bav.; a better man I never met for quiet, unobtrusive goodness from boyhood. Two-and-thirty years have I known him.

*February 3rd.*—I went down last week to Standish to dear Bav.'s funeral, and saw him laid in the well-known churchyard amongst the old scenes. How strangely touching it all seemed! On my return stopped at Oxford. I do not think I have ever been more cheered than by the sight of my Oxford men, such a true-hearted, sound band of trustworthy trained spirits. I was strengthened by the sight.

*February 12th.*—Dear Bav. has left a nephew whom he wished to educate. We shall take him for him. I am thankful to be able to repay him more than in life he received.

*March 23rd.*—Kempthorne high in the first class of the Tripos. Nettleship low in the second. I am so enraged at the latter fact that all my joy at the former is embittered. By what frightful mismanagement they have contrived at Christ's to make a good man like Nettleship no higher after his three years than he was when he left school I cannot conceive. It is true he wanted judicious handling, but I have never had a better pupil in some respects than he was. Some of his work with me here has never been surpassed.

*March 25th.*—I am reading *Mendelssohn's Letters*, a noble book which has done me much good. I feel very nerved for work, and in much better order than I did. I must cast all personalities, all things out of my mind and heart, but the *cause*, and the *cause* as in Christ's hands, in faith and hope, but not anxious or down-hearted come what may.

*April 29th.*—Took a walk this afternoon by Beaumont Chase and round by Wardley Wood. I feel severely in the spring and autumn the being shut out from the woods, which used to be so great a pleasure—all the more because I have long thought the heavy squire property idea the curse of England.

*May 17th.*—After my Grammars have been slowly creeping on for twelve years unnoticed, except by being prigged from without acknowledgment, till the Clarendon commissioned me, this morning I received a most handsome letter from that great scholar, B. Kennedy, expressing his regret at seeing my name to the Harrow Memorial, and proposing an alliance with me for the elementary works, and to take my Grammar as the basis, if I would accede to a few suggestions which I find on looking at I can do. This puts my books, in the judgment of the first English scholar of the old school, first, as the Clarendon has already done as representing the new school. It is a great reward for patient work. Kennedy's name is to me quite historical, as he was headmaster of Shrewsbury and a name before I left school or thereabouts, and as a wielder of the classical languages he is unrivalled.

*June 4th.*—Life is beginning to be very happy with me; God seems to be all around me in blessing, blessing work and blessing rest, and giving wisdom and new fresh thoughts.

*June 19th.*—The impression made by Nettleship at Oxford seems very great indeed, quite extraordinary. I can well believe it, as his knowledge, thoughtfulness, and receptive humility are very striking. Thank God for letting me see this first.

*August 17th.*—The Bishop of Brisbane here, and gave us a most excellent lecture to-night on missions in Australia. It will quite bring new life and ideas into the school. I am very thankful for it. He proposed that the school should build a parsonage house at a poor station he named. I hope we may do it, but we have got much good, that we cannot help having done.

An autograph letter from my dear old father this afternoon, full of satisfaction at Kennedy's letter and compliments. . . . I am so glad that he and mother have lived to see that there was a method in my madness, and that it was not wilful disobedience to them or pigheadedness. They have been very loving always, though sometimes I have been sorely tried.

*September 2nd.*—Looked over my banking account yesterday. Thank God for his goodness. For the first time in many years there is a balance in my favour after payment of all my debts, excepting the £1600 advanced by my father years ago.

Thank God. I wish to give one year's clear profits as a thank-offering with Marie's consent. I have spoken to her about it.

*September 29th.*—At twelve to-day S—— baptized in the parish church, Marie and I and C—— being sponsors. He is a good boy. S—— came in; he was full of feeling, quiet and suppressed, and wanted to know what he could do. I told him work for Christ's sake now and hereafter in an honest, true way, and that would be our exceeding great reward.

*October 18th.*—To-day I burnt all the letters and correspondence referring to that awful period of my struggles here, and the trials which so nearly killed me. I am glad I have done so. . . .

*December 1st.*—(Discussing with the school the punishment inflicted on a boy, for a long course of very quiet disobedience and resistance). . . . That some people had strange ideas of authority, and acted as if they believed that all authority, power, teaching, and established order was in a conspiracy against them, and they lords of all things, only ill-treated by their subjects; that the idea of a hero and heroism put before the mind was something very strange. J——'s was hanging back against the reins resolutely, whilst all he ought to reverence and love was striving to pull him up the hill. That this sort of hero was familiar enough to all boys who knew watering-places—pulling back against the reins. . . . I then said that no punishment was equal to that which he had inflicted on himself. Life did not end with school. What next? why, either the same story over again, each successive start, and a lower, worse result each time, or to reclimb in weariness, pain, and disgrace the ground that might have been trodden in happiness and honour, always pursuing the lost years, just as we all know what it is to chase a lost half-hour through the day, and never catching them. Lost time is never regained; all that can be done is not to destroy the future also.

*January 13th*, 1867.—It has been a trying holiday. People talk of change being necessary, fresh scenes, etc., and with some truth, but I am disposed to think that a fresh digging up of the heart by God, and a fresh outpouring of His Holy Spirit into it, is a more true refreshment for true work than the most successful tour in the outer world.

*January 17th.*—A fearful ice accident yesterday in the Regent's Park. Some thirty or forty people drowned; the numbers not known yet. Among them poor Woodhouse, one of our boys—a good fellow. It is a great reward for true work, or trying to work truly, the not being afraid to think of those who have departed from us, but being comforted rather. . . .

*February 9th.*—Had a letter from Mitchinson this morning with a scheme for a union amongst the better grammar schools for a joint annual school tripos, as it were. I see it wont act, and I don't want in the present state of school politics and knowledge to get mixed up with any party or movement. But I do not mean either to throw cold water on the thing. I shall go quietly to work.

*March 2nd.*—A weary week over, full of work and worries, but one great reward, the way the school has behaved, which has quite cheered and recompensed me. All the boys gave themselves up who had used catapults (forty-two) and also the bird killer. They have indeed acted up to their charter, and I am proud and happy, and mean to tell them so on Monday and pardon all.

*March 12th.*—Spoke most strongly to the masters this morning that I would not have any ear-boxing or corporal punishment of any kind inflicted by them, apropos to a letter received. The practice has been creeping in. Read the punishment rules. I think there is some inclination to break the law, but I mean to be very firm on the point.

*March 22nd.*—Heavy snow half to-day. It held up in the afternoon, and I went out and made a snow woman for the children in the garden, and afterwards the boys of my house had got together an immense heap of snow, some eight feet high, I should think, at least. I went and cut it into a gigantic sitting figure for them, taking two hours or more, and we really made a first-rate statue. They were immensely pleased, and cheered me when I retired, and afterwards at night they lighted it up and called me out to look at it. I fear, though, it is doomed; if it will but freeze to-night, however, it will last some time. It was very jolly working with them.

*March 24th.*—Skrine has won a Corpus. A very nice

letter from Conington this morning giving me an account of his performance. His translation was "exceptionally good." There were fifty-seven candidates, and the excellence of them beyond all preceding years. This is pleasant.

*March 30th.*—The welcome telegram to-day that Lewis Nettleship has won the Ireland. This is glorious. To-day I really felt a happiness in results. Before it has been rather a sense of *deliverance*, of drawing breath with a danger passed, blessed and greatly needed, but too serious for enjoyment. To-day I felt a rest and enjoyment as well; for these successes quite put us in the first ranks of winners. God has rolled away the reproach from me, and I feel at the right time. Earlier I myself should not have felt so deeply the complete victory of true though less glorious work had the intellectual glitter come then, and the school might have been entirely lowered in honour and truth by being caught by low ambition. Now it is only the polish on the solid, well-worked embossed shield, giving a certain brightness indeed to the figures and precious chasings, but not *the* preciousness itself. It will please my old father, too, so much, and dear mother. I hope my letter will give them the first news, as it is Sunday to-morrow and no newspapers. How many great things have happened to me on *Saturday* and Sunday. It is a thing I love to think of, then I can thank God better. I do thank Thee, O God. The race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong; that I feel and know, as years have brought wisdom, and I rejoice to feel and know it. A strange mixture of awe and gladness and softness of heart is on me. How wonderful is life! How has God given me a better work than I hoped for, when of old I hoped to work for Him, when at Cambridge in my untried dreams I longed to serve in His army. How He is blessing it, I trust. May He keep me to the end. It is so hard to remain simple and untarnished. There is a certain surface power in beginning that when one has penetrated through the crust in life work, and sees the weakness and iniquity of one's own heart, as well as the strong powers against good, that seem utterly to break down and leave one like a creature with its shell changing, soft and feeble and defenceless, the old gone and the new not come. Yet it is not so, the invisible has come, but it is hard to be sure of it,

hard to let go the visible, hard and a thing of time to walk with God. But I will not fear.

*April 1st.*—Made a very strong and I think good speech to the school this morning (apropos to some fool or fools having defaced the notices of their own Game Committees), on the want of law and honour in the school, and what really made a great school, clenching it with giving out Nettleship's great triumph, and telling them it was worthless compared with the individual truth and love of law and good of the boys, by which the meanest amongst them in age or rank added to, or diminished from the character of the school and its true glory. I trust this fortunate coincidence of Nettleship's splendid feat just when I wanted to pitch into them about their mean, disorderly doings will add weight to what I said.

*April 10th.*—On Tuesday I brought forward my English Scholarship scheme, and I am happy to say it passed unanimously. Witts first raised the question of a scholarship, but he wanted classics. The more I thought of it, the more useless it seemed, as we should always know who would get it, so it would only touch a narrow circle of boys who already read and work. He was not in at the beginning, so there was not a word said on any other tack, and when he came he did not say much. So the English scholarship passed *nem. con.* in this form. We devote £80 a year in the following way: a scholarship of £20 for two years, two of £10 once, two of £5, ten of £1. The same papers to be set to all, boys under sixteen to compete; and one £10, one £5, four £1 to be devoted to boys under thirteen. The exam. first week after the return at Easter. I think this will be a wonderful help both to our honour and average education. If boys did but know language it would be easy to teach them the Latin language. . . .

Then there has been a great controversy about the championship, in which I have acted as arbiter and legal adviser of the Games Committee, and all the parties concerned are pleased and satisfied at the unravelling of the tangle and final decision. It is curious, but I have no doubt this power of getting to the inner boy life, and their trust in me in matters of this sort, is more potent for real good here than all the rest of my work almost put together.

*April 11th.*—A nicely written paragraph in the *Guardian* about Nettleship and our success, just what should be said if it was said, probably by W——, but I wish they would let matters alone, and not stick things into the papers. As long as fame meant bread and escape from ruin it was different, but now it doesn't; the less we are noticed the better. Those who care will know, but the praise and glitter of popular fame is a great snare and drawback to true work, particularly among boys. They are too apt to be led by what people say, and to look away from true unconscious work into a glittering mirror of distorted self.

*September 10th.*—Walked out with Anstey and Rawnsley in the afternoon. The former asked me point blank whether I was satisfied with the school according to my theories. I answered on the whole "yes," very decidedly, and then went into the petty causes which somewhat interfered with a more perfect result, and explained pretty fully how things went on.

*October 13th.*—The papers full of scoffs at the Pan Anglican Lambeth Conference, as they well may be for their part; for it is a great day and a great deed for England. God has given the Archbishop wisdom and courage to prepare for the winning battle, and also to prepare for standing alone, if, as seems likely, the day goes against Christ's Church. The State has seen with hatred and fear and scorn mixed the Church standing out apart from itself, belonging to many lands, and yet obedient to laws.

*November 28th.*—To-day I have authorised Street to take the tenders for our beautiful west gallery, £641, 16s. Field, of London, is the contractor. Our appeal for money is going on well as yet compared with the former one. I shall be so glad to get a finished bit of ornamental work in the chapel.

*December 1st.*—The Holy Communion. About 135 present and 25 went out; a glorious sight, make whatever deductions can be made. Yesternight two boys came in to me to ask advice how to settle a bad boy in their house, and uphold morality and right. This is very cheering. They tell me to-day they think they can manage it.

*December 5th.*—Yesterday morning a letter from Barnard Smith, asking me to act on a committee to which I had been appointed with sundry bigwigs of the county, in the matter of

setting on foot a new middle class school. I wrote a very important letter, which I feel will bring me a good deal of trouble, and declined. I would not have written any reasons, but I have a strong conviction, that as the world moves on the cause of truth loses very much by the false men who have opposed it all along being allowed to slip in at the end, and seem to support and favour it when it is prosperous. I think hard-working, suffering men would work more hopefully if they felt that their difficulties had had to be borne by others, and the scene was not painted so fair *afterwards*. So I wrote plainly and boldly that I would take no part in any public matter in the county, and said why. Nothing would have been a falser step on my part. They want my experience and my name; but I should have had no real influence, no power, much labour, more mortification; and if it went wrong, the people who value my work here—my real world—would blame me, not them. No, they don't catch me in that trap. Still I need not have given reasons, and I much dread the annoyance the having done so may cost me.

*December 9th.*—My home and work have become very happy. In spite of much toil and surface vexation, inseparable some of it from a schoolmaster's life, some of it a speciality of this county, life has ripened into a very happy lot. My heart feels at peace, and all the crushing care and bitterness has been succeeded by a calm of completed tasks and blessings vouchsafed on them.

*December 24th.*—A happy day on the whole, beginning with a very complimentary letter from Dr. Craik, who has been Moderator of the General Assembly in Scotland, on my book. As I know nothing in the world about him this was pleasant. Then I put up the beautiful engraving of Holman Hunt's "Finding in the Temple," and very beautiful it is. Wrote on the back that the signatures are autographs.

*January 22nd*, 1868.—A most gratifying letter from Lewis Nettleship, speaking very confidentially to me about his views, and opening out his heart; giving me at the same time very warm thanks for what I had been to him in religious matters, which is an inexpressible comfort to me.

*February 26th.*—A beautiful day, and a day to me of much blessing. First of all I actually sent off the real last proof of

my Grammar. I am so glad. Best of all I walked out with Anstey, and in the nicest way he offered £100 to the chapel, and, on my expressing the wish, allowed me to divert it to the garden. So that will be begun at once. I shall, however, again ask him to-morrow whether he had not really rather devote it to the chapel. In any case I feel cheered and blessed. . . .

*March 1st.*—Heard from Witts to-day that the report of the Commissioners has come out, that there was an abstract of it in the newspaper. So in a day or two I shall have it. I am rather curious to see it, but do not expect much. "Put not your trust in princes," especially in parliamentary princes, who have to look after themselves and their own balance a great deal too much. Still it is another step in the education question. If I could but feel my heart sounder and purer I should not mind anything else, but it is hard to keep calm, and work with depth and fervour when half one's work is gnat catching. Hard, too, to be faithful when one sees the silly way conceited men and boys walk by their life work with their noses in the air, and sip and spill and abuse the water bought for them, like that for David, with very life blood. Yet it ought not to be hard. It is just what Christ sees us do, and yet he loves and helps us.

*March 18th.*—I am able also to send one [of his Grammars] to each of my old tutors Chapman and Goodford, with honest encomiums on their past work. This I am very glad of. I could not send *Education and School.* It went too much against the grain of Eton.

*March 20th.*—My dear little Couper very ill, dangerously so. We had Dr. Paley over from Peterborough. I like him. He says my little boy is evenly balanced now, and that the next forty-eight hours will probably decide recovery or not. I never loved a little fellow so much. He is so brave and gentle, and his father in India too. Pray God he be spared to us. I do pray God for him if it is possible for us. . . .

*March 21st.*—My dear little man a little better, we hope, not worse at least to-day. A—— has been with him all day, and he has been quite cheery.

*March 26th.*—I was very pleased to hear to-day that Little, Earle, and Cornish start the subscription for the Old Boy

window with £100. This makes it certain that we shall be able to order it, as they will, I doubt not, get £200 more, and by the time it is up be able to get the rest. This, with Anstey's donation, quite puts me in heart. It seems that the sacrifices made bear some fruit even in that way. . . .

*May 19th.*—This morning a letter from Mitchinson at Canterbury, asking me to preach his anniversary sermon on June 10th, in the Cathedral. I have consented to do so, if the Bishop of Peterborough, to whom he has written, does not: I like him, and think it part of my work, too, to take the opportunities offered me just as much as I think it my business and duty not to push myself forward.

*June 3rd.*—A boy of sixteen to-day told me a dolphin had two legs, and then corrected himself, four. Another of fourteen that a whale was a sea quadruped. *N.B.*—He knew what a quadruped was; I asked him.

*June 12th.*—P——, after being eight years at the school, plucked for matriculation at Oxford. *A great disgrace to us*, whatever we may say. I took occasion to enlarge on this text to the masters. It will work good. They admitted the disgrace; that was something.

*June 16th.*—My Scotchmen (Fettes Trustees) came to-day and I took them over the school, and showed them everything, and let a great deal of light into their proceedings, I think. They had been going about with no principle to guide them, and I gave them one. . . . What will come of it I know not, but some good, some more method in their proceedings certainly. I could not help contrasting in my heart their £100,000 to spend in building, and their desire to do it well, with my own governors and their antagonism.

*August 16th.*—The school *quite* full; actually no room to take any more. Hodgkinson over thirty.

*August 21st.*—Just now Miles came in to speak to me about his boy and his work, and I had a very interesting talk with him. He is a good fellow. I set before him that he must vividly impress the ethics of education. First, that it is valuable; secondly, that each boy can *certainly* get it; that the denial of these propositions, the worst evil the neglect of the great schools has brought on England, was at the root of most non-learning. Also that an idle, obstinate boy is a

problem for an able man to master; the worse the material the greater the skill in working it, and that he must not be baffled.

*September 15th.*—To-day sent a cheque for £243 to Macmillan, all overdrawn, but I am thankful to put it in that shape even. I will eschew publishing. Nothing but magazines or novels seem to pay. And now I am glad to say I have got the books out which I actually wanted.

*October 4th.*—During the last two or three years the constant recurrence of petty offences, without being able to fasten them on the school at large, whilst at the same time it was clear that the total absence of a common spirit was the real cause, has been inexpressibly trying. I have felt more and more that the old school feeling one strove for so long and under such difficulties was gradually slipping away, passing into air, and yet that there was no way to get at it and stop it. All one said seemed empty sound, but now at last I have an occasion which the school feels, which I can punish heavily, and which makes it natural and fitting to speak strongly and enter into full explanation.

*October 12th.*—I had a letter from Stogdon at Haileybury yesterday which I have made do right good service. He spoke of the keenness of the Haileybury sixth form for work. I just read it out to my class, and asked them each how far they recognised Uppingham in such a statement. I believe I really have stirred them up very much at last. I ought to have done so; their dead-alive ways, with one foot in their work and the other in their own fancies, and head and body lolling between the two, are quite insufferable.

*October 29th.*—The special offertory on Sunday for Australia was £20. This was really very good. Another cheering fact.

*December 3rd.*—This morning a most successful experiment with my fire shell in the greenhouse, proving conclusively that a detached fire may be put into the middle of the room, or in any part of it, with an ornamental flue, and no heat be lost. This is excellent.

*February 7th*, 1869.—A boy named L—— not come back. Run away. I hope no harm has come to him. How this would have tormented me in the day of our adversity and

danger! Thank God that is over, yet much remains. I suppose I never shall get over the dread of the work and the shrinking from the dealing with human beings, with all its anxiety and uncertainty and self-searchings. To-morrow the first school day; how glad I shall be to be well in it again, with something definite instead of the shadowy but real fears of coming trial.

*February 15th.*—Certainly the comparative freedom from care is a great boon. Happy the kingdom that has no history. 310 boys in the upper school, 45 in the lower; quite full.

*February 21st.*—This morning the draft of the bill to be introduced into Parliament about schools came. It stirs up my thoughts. I had some idea of writing a letter to Beresford Hope, the Cambridge member, who sent it, but on second thoughts shall do nothing. But this keeps one anxious and expectant. I have no fears for ourselves. We can scarcely help being gainers, but it may bring me a great deal of awkward work and temptation and worry, and I have little hope on the whole question, which is sad and trying.

*April 20th.*—It is flattering that whenever there is any talk of great schools under this bill, from whatever quarter, Uppingham is mentioned in the van.

*May 1st.*—The day before yesterday we settled to buy an acre of land and set about our hospital immediately, and also to buy the two acres next at £250 per acre. It is the only building land very convenient to us left, so I am well pleased. I have felt happy and strong to-day in spirit. I thank God with all my heart for His great goodness to us.

*May 26th.*—A capital letter from Mr. Johnson, ready to work heartily with me, acknowledging to the full the position of the school. . . . I have written again to say I think we shall have little difficulty, and that the better men of the governors will be ready to join us, but if not, that it will not hurt.

*June 8th.*—An important day, as the Select Committee sit on the second part of the bill. Had a note from Harper, saying he had sent up both my letters to them. They were pretty strong, but I don't care; plain speaking is necessary, and as they were private communications they cannot be viewed as aggressive.

*September 10th.*—This day sixteen years ago I first came to Uppingham as master, having never visited it till two days

before, when I went back to Cookham Dene to pack up some books and come. What a wondrous change!

*September 22nd.*—Have begun German again seriously, and hope to get on. Have written to the bishop to thank him, and ask for a confirmation in the spring. . . . Masters satisfied with my scheme for the school. This is good also.

*September 23rd.*—Heard from Alington to-day that he has written to accept our missionary post in London under Mr. Boyd at the Victoria Docks. An excellent thing for us; I hope good for him.

*September 27th.*—This morning I spoke to the school on almsgiving, and announced to them that the arrangements about our mission were completed, and that Wynford Alington had accepted it.

*October 9th.*—I feel so much being in health. It is wonderful. I cannot think I am so old as I am when the refreshment of this new health is with me. All is well in work, except that I feel troubled in heart somewhat at my own feelings. The work interests me so much less. I do not feel that deep inward hold upon it, and it on me, that I used to. I always said I must stick to this as long as I had work left in me, and I blamed men who left their spheres, but now the temptation gets very great. I long so at last to have a home, not to be for ever with boys in the house, and all the responsibility, unrest, and wretchfulness of this life upon me; to get away also from this place, where sixteen years of exile and coldness have ingrained feelings on both sides that cannot now be done away with. Yet if this longing is wrong, God grant I may not give way to it. I pray I may do right. I would fain work His will.

*October 15th.*—Have just come from the governors. . . . They have taken exception to my legal position under the bill, and mean to act independently. (I find a notice has been sent in.) They are infinitely disgusted with my having taken the initiative,—infinitely. Will not act with me; want me to submit my statement and scheme to them. When they let out that they would send in a counter scheme, I said I should not do so till I heard from them in what light they regarded me. We have, accordingly, parted in the emphatic Thucydidean phrase, *ἀπρακτοι*.

I am ashamed to say how very lonely and perturbed I feel to-night. . . . A deep sense of weakness and danger comes over me as I feel my lonely, solitary stand in this land of exile, and on the other side the Commissioners with all their undefined powers and undefined principles; what is defined, their non-religious character and their very definite yielding to popular cries for some subjects, etc., definitely against me. "I can only lift my eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help."

*November 7th.*—. . . The week altogether has been a week of strength and courage to me. My heart rises and I feel upheld, quiet and clear, and close to God.

*November 9th.*—Much discussion this morning at the masters' meeting on money questions, first brought up by a question whether the boys could be allowed to subscribe for fives courts. This I rather vetoed. Then it passed into making another appeal for the chapel, which I very decidedly spoke against; and then for raising the terms, which I held out no hopes of as far as masters were concerned. It is odd how utterly they fail to see that the cause of true work can easily suffer in the most deadly way if prosperity is used to make a profit and impose fresh taxes.

*November 19th.*—Not least disgusting, though, but in a different way is the fact that about forty copies only have been sold of my *Education and School*, the only book on schools in England, the statements in which have never been controverted, and cannot be, which is supported by Uppingham as a fact and an illustration; and this whilst Commission after Commission sits, laws are passed, and the air is thick with jaw and omniscience on the subject. It is very disheartening, and I do feel disheartened at the endless work, the poverty and money question, the gigantic obstacles, the inefficiency and lying efforts and lying glory of the great schools, and the more than gigantic indifference of our enlightened country combined with the love of showy deceits.

*November 20th.*—Rather downhearted. The work, possibly, which is very constant and hard, and the double wound to my vanity and beliefs about my book, have brought home to me very closely how utterly I am without hope of really overcoming the gigantic confederacy of power, prestige, money, and ignorance, all so deeply pledged against truth in schools.

As often as this gets pressed home, the work becomes more galling, and all the petty vexations, real and imaginary, swarm like flies. God knows how many hours of my life are passed in thinking over the situation of the school, and guarding in imagination against attack, and shaping my course in case things go wrong. Too many, I fear. . . . It is hard to work on without any hope of the good cause conquering in England, with at best, as far as that is concerned, a faint idea of improvement in some of the more outrageous defects. Still on the side of comfort I feel God is with me. I feel He has allowed me to succeed in showing truth. I feel still more that He has given me to breathe it into living hearts, and to light a quenchless flame; though where and how that flame will blaze up is hidden from me. This ought to be more than enough, and in the depths of my heart is, but, such is man, my surface daily temper and feeling sometimes feel little or nothing of this strong inward comfort beyond barren knowledge that it is there.

*November 23rd.*—History examination going on. This morning hard at work, and completely remodelled "my suggestion for a scheme" during the school-time. An immense weight off my mind. It has haunted me. A rather impudent letter from —— this morning, in answer to my Congress invitation. It is amusing to see how exactly those schools that are most rotten stand on their hind legs.

*November 28th.*—Yesterday, as I went out in the rain, just as I got by The Chequers, Rockingham Road, some young fellows whistled as a signal to a companion leaning against the rails, a little way up the hill, in the soaking rain, and asked him to come in with them. I was curious to see the end. He steadily refused the temptation in the most plucky way, and turned to go home alone in the wet just as I came up. I had a little chat with him, and gave him three shillings, which I borrowed of Mr. Earle whom I met. I was much struck with the scene. Heavy showers to-day. I wish I had gone round the studies to-night. My conscience smites me because I shirked it, as it was such a nuisance. I feel wonderfully well in health, quite young again.

*December 4th.*—Nettleship has won the Balliol fellowship; a grand finale to his Oxford career.

*December 5th.*—I have been reading Bishop Hamilton's life. He was a noble fellow. It has done me good, I hope. May God give me grace to wish for nothing but a true heart and a true work.

*December 13th.*—I hear the governors are actually mad enough to be making proposals in their scheme for a modern school here. The audacity of this, when you may say not a penny of the school work is paid by the foundation, is astounding. And the folly of it, when the late Commission condemned modern schools, scarcely less so.

*December 18th.*—Kempthorne came, and I had a very full talk with him on all matters of school life. I was very pleased with his genuine belief in their doing true work at Wellington and his interest in it. It is gratifying to find this spirit is strong in schools. He is much wiser on the subject than he was a year or two ago; and really I think the visit did us both good; the old boys generally were very nice and well behaved as usual.

We may pause here to take account of what had already been accomplished. In the years which had elapsed since Thring took the school in 1853 it had been lifted in point of numbers and reputation from the position of a small county grammar school into an acknowledged position among the best of the ancient English public schools. The twenty-five pupils with which he began had increased to more than three hundred. Houses for boarders had been established in sufficient numbers, each adapted to carry out the principles which Thring believed essential for the right training of boy life. A noble chapel had been built as a centre for the common religious life of the school. A schoolroom large enough to hold the whole body on public occasions furnished sufficient opportunity for common life in other things. A lower school had been founded as an adjunct to the larger establishment. All the ordinary equipment for games and

recreation usual in the best public schools had been secured, and to these a gymnasium, then a new feature in English schools, had been added. A carpentry, also the first of its kind in a public school, gave pleasant employment and some degree of manual instruction to boys with a turn in that direction. Music was cultivated as it had never been cultivated in any English public school before. These were the chief external facts. A resolute will and a clear purpose had enabled him to accomplish in a few years what in other schools had been the slow growth of many generations, or if more speedy, the result of splendid endowment. A will no less resolute and a purpose equally clear were required to deal with other and more public sides of his school life.

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## CHAPTER VI

### SCHOOL COMMISSIONS

THE main constructive work at Uppingham was barely completed, when Thring was forced to enter upon a prolonged and anxious contest to save from overthrow some of the fundamental principles on which it had been founded, and on which his educational beliefs were based. He had been deeply interested in the appointment of a School Commission in 1865, and when summoned before it, had stated fully his views on school structure, and the best methods of developing the smaller endowed schools. His reception by the Commissioners had been very friendly, and he had been led to hope that their report would at least embody the gist of these views. They were not even referred to, but instead, he found what he calls "a great indirect glorification of the old and new shams." Of the Commission generally, he says:—

> How ridiculous it will seem in years to come appointing a lot of squires and a stray lord or two to gather promiscuous evidence on an intricate professional question, and sum up, and pronounce infallible judgment on it. However, this is the English panacea now—this witches' caldron—and small hopes it gives. I do not feel downcast. God has helped us in spite of "princes" all along, and will do so, but it vexes and mortifies, and makes the future look very dark, and the

present feel very cold. However, the work goes on; that is not stopped. If Christ accepts that, what signifies the rest? If I can feel this, what signifies the rest? And I do in part feel it.

What he had hoped for from the Commission is shown in a letter to his friend the headmaster of Sherborne, who had suggested that an appeal should be made for new schemes on which to govern their schools.

To Rev. H. D. Harper.

*January 18th*, 1869.—I could not answer your letter before as I was absent from home, and only returned on Saturday. The report of the Commissioners was "a very heavy blow and great discouragement," but I do not see my way to action. Indeed, the heaviest blow, it appears to me, education could have received. I made quite certain that the question, "What constitutes a good school?" must be raised. I was not hopeful, far from it, but I thought a Commission with so general a scope, examining all kinds of schools, could not help somewhat discerning, whether right or wrong in its views, the meaning of the word "School." And if this was done, attention at least would be excited, and this would be a gain. Alas! even this very modest hope was found false.

The Commissioners have not raised the question at all, but have tacitly assumed that certain schools not within their province of inspection are models, and that all the schools that fell within their net need only be like them; yea, that a happy combination of ability and fortunes may possibly raise some to this level—a glorious crown for Uppingham and Sherborne. Still I do not see my way out of it. I admit that when I find the praises of these schools everywhere, I am a little cast down—*ἀνθρώπινόν τι πάσχω*—and I marvel at the stupendous mismanagement which has converted the being selected as the greatest criminals into a badge of honour. But the worst thing that can happen, it seems to me, is to have Uppingham thrown into the same category as . . . and . . . and . . . *et hoc genus omne*, in their

gilded eminence of wrong, crying their war cry, "In the name of the prophet—Figs." Yet there is a lower deep still,—to be boiled down in the same caldron with the model schools of the Commissioners of more modern date.

But I don't see my way out of it. Any appeal, it seems to me, must of necessity take one or the other of these bases.

As regards Uppingham itself, we are in perfect working order, and want nothing but friendly governors and a less chilling neighbourhood, but we are not likely to get either of these drawbacks remedied, as the whole current of both Commissions tends to glorify show and depress work on the whole.

There is no standard to appeal to. What great school, even in theory, has faced the problem of teaching and training *each boy* in the best way, with all the constructive skill and machinery involved in that problem?

For my part I desire to separate my lot entirely from the fashionable schools, and to cast it in, come weal come woe, with the earnest working men, and smaller schools, which one may hope to see doing honest work. But then the standard to refer to should be, "What work is each school intended to do?" and next, "What tools has it for doing this honestly?" Up to a certain point, and a high point too, the mere dead construction, the brick and mortar situation, etc., are everything. We don't want the governors to give us their old lumbering seventy-fours, or still worse their cheap imitations of them, as the models for our new steam fleet.

But what is to be done? I confess I don't see. We have not got to the threshold of the inquiry; what *teaching* really means—and what *training* really means—and what a school *to teach and train each boy* really means. Our authorities, to which the appeal must be made, have finished before they have started. I cannot make an appeal under such circumstances. It is a real fact that England is ringing with discordant cries and omniscient prodigality of suggestions as to what subjects should or should not be taught; this is to be changed—that introduced; whereas any experienced man, I am sure you will agree with me, must cry, "For God's sake teach anything, only ensure that your great schools by their construction *do not prevent true teaching*, and afterwards it will be time enough to discuss subjects."

Subjects can be changed at any time, new ones brought in, old ones cast out or recalled, but when thousands of pounds have been spent on wrong principles of construction, and costly and sometimes beautiful buildings put up—which, nevertheless, are second, third, fourth, or fifth rate in work and efficiency—a yoke that cannot be shaken off—that is a very different matter.

I have entered into this matter at greater length than I should otherwise have done, as I thought it necessary to explain why I cannot see my way to any action as long as there is no standard of truth to refer to, though I feel the report of the Commissioners to be the most disastrous, as it is the most unexpected reverse that the cause of true work has received or can receive.

Mr. Walter, of the *Times*, an Eton contemporary and acquaintance, who was now watching from his place in Parliament the progress of the Endowed Schools Act, had written to ask his opinion on certain points in the proposed Bill.

To JOHN WALTER, ESQ., M.P.

*February 26th*, 1869.—The proposal to examine masters before appointing them is obviously absurd, till you drop below the class of men who would have been at any university, that is, below the middle school standard in the great majority of instances in endowed schools. If carried out it would either deter good candidates from offering, or be despised by them, and so before long fall into general contempt. I have never had the slightest difficulty in getting men competent as far as attainments went. The market is full of men of knowledge sufficient. But there is immense difficulty in getting men with any idea of teaching. Indeed, the idea of teaching, in the true sense of the word, has not yet come into the higher school horizon at all; but this difficulty would be increased by the sham of a fresh knowledge test. Again, who are to examine? A large proportion of the masters of endowed schools are men of good degrees, in

many cases of very good degrees. Are they to be examined by their equals in merit, their inferiors possibly in age and experience? The same objection applies, amongst others, to the scheme of Government school examinations. In the case of the National Schools (though even there the plan pursued seems to me painfully faulty) there is at all events this point, that the examiners are the obvious superiors in rank and knowledge of the examinees. But in the case of a large number of the schools now under consideration this is not the fact. For instance, the late Commission sent down here a young Fellow of Trinity, a Rugby man, a Master of Wellington College, to report on the school. He was a man who had just attained the sort of distinction that I had twenty-five years ago, and others of the masters since. What regard was due to his opinion, trained as he was in an antagonistic system, and lacking our experience? I can speak the more candidly, because personally he was a pleasant, agreeable fellow, and as his report has not yet appeared I am in total darkness as to the statement he has made about us, whether it is good or evil. But if this feeling is pretty general, as it must be, from circumstances and the nature of things, in a given number of years the inspection becomes either a farce or a tyranny. And what adds very much to the unworkable character of the scheme is the fact, that neither Commission has even raised the question of what is meant by a good school, much less come to any definite conclusion on this point. I, and many with me, I believe, feel sure that all the requirements of a good school, the machinery without which true work is impossible, are most definite, and can be stated in each case with great certainty. So if we are right, the Government is going to plunge into the great work of reconstructing all education without any fixed principle to guide them, up to their eyes in conflicting evidence, and in total ignorance of what is desirable or practicable under given conditions; with no ground secure to begin from, and seemingly in a state of utter confusion between the very different subjects of what is to be taught and what is necessary before you can teach anything. But this want of principle makes it impossible to feel any interest except fear in these great measures, as we do not see how any real part can be

taken in a work of this kind till the preliminary question, "how each boy can be trained in the best and most certain way, given the price that can be paid" is decided. It seems to me people must know what they want before there is much chance of getting it, and that to set about making a thing before there is any settled idea what the thing to be made is, in any case is strange, but in the case of legislators who are not professionally engaged in the work and conversant with details, impossible. I fear I have troubled you with a long letter. I could scarcely really answer the question you put without going into some collateral questions which perhaps drew me on.

Thring's real anxieties began when, as a result of the Report of the first Commission, the Endowed Schools Act of 1869 provided for the appointment of Commissioners empowered to undertake the reconstitution of ancient trusts and foundations.

These Commissioners soon turned their attention to Uppingham. Their right to deal absolutely with the school and its resources was more manifest in law than in equity. Because the new foundation of Thring's creation, already with more than £10,000 of yearly income, to be much increased later, was connected with an old foundation which produced barely £1000, the whole was treated as subject to the jurisdiction of the Commissioners. Thring had always dreaded the hand of external power applied to life-work; he now saw it preparing to deal with all that he deemed most vital in his school.

*December 29th.*—Once more the war has begun. This morning I received a short kindly letter from Roby, the secretary to the Commissioners, drawing my attention to the fact unofficially that he could see nothing in our statutes to make this school an exception to the clauses which are to unchurch schools. Little words which I have long been fearing and expecting. I wrote back unofficially, that if the having been

founded by a country clergyman in post-Reformation times, and on the strength of that my having refounded the school in these sixteen years, did not constitute a claim to be a Church school, when this was clear and all other remedies failed, I should put my resignation into the hands of the Commissioners, but that it would be a hard return for seventeen years of such work as I have spent here to drive me out. And I did not think it would encourage either education or freedom. But the bigotry of the Liberals is unspeakable, and unjust as it would be, I am not at all sure that I shall prevail against them. Truly it is hard, but I am thankful to say I feel strong in heart and health and not cast down. I thank God for that. Between the governors and the Government, with their lust for power, life gets rather squeezed into a corner, and a thorny corner too.

*December 30th.*—It is marvellous how step by step life moves on, and before one knows how or why, some great irrevocable event has come, gone, perhaps, and a long vista of doubt and difficulty opens. . . . .

It seems a mockery in this quiet, petty routine of artificial modern life to have to stake one's home and all on a great true principle, which nevertheless in the candle-light of popular feeling looks shadowy, and dim, and out of place. The very persecutors of our days are mean and unmanly, velvety and sneaking, cruel, cruel enough, but coming in so smooth a shape that one has to rub one's eyes to be sure they are real, and to peer into the frosty fog of half belief, chilled and cold, with nothing to rouse the heart, till one-half begins to think it is a delusion. I feel very awed by the thoughts of next year. May God and Christ keep me and mine. To-day I received the first actual money I have ever touched for my books, £14 from the Clarendon Press. I am thankful for that. It cheers me though it is not much.

*December 31st.*—This morning a very reassuring letter from Roby made the last day of the year elastic and bright to me, even though I did write letters for four hours to-day without finishing all I had to write. All is in good train now for the coming work with the Commissioners and the settling the new scheme. I feel cheered and strong, more secure and hopeful in heart than I have done for many months.

To H. J. Roby.

*Dec. 29th*, 1869.—You raise one vital point in your letter: the question of whether this is to be a Church school as heretofore, or not. I will be candid on this also.

The fact that the school was founded by a country clergyman in post-Reformation times, with 18 out of 22 governors appointed by himself, clergymen, and that till within this century [the Church's] prayers have been said from that time to this does mark the foundation distinctly to be a Church foundation. I saw this clearly when I came here, and on the faith of this made my plans. I can testify most solemnly that my sole motive (if that can be called a sole motive the absence of which would have made every other null and void) was to do a work here for Christ, by which I am bigot enough to mean the Church of Christ as now existing in this kingdom, whether it is to be disestablished or not. I believe in no other permanent fountain of good. The school as it now works is entirely the result of this belief. If this refounding is to be overriden, as well as the original founding of the school by a clergyman, the Government is bound to give us back our chapel and schoolroom which we gave them, and let us start for ourselves. If they will not do this, and no regard is had to those who founded this school either in past or present times, and all remedy fails, I have counted the cost, and shall at once, as soon as that is clear, place my resignation in the hands of the Commissioners, and leave them to find some one else to carry out their will and the will of the Government. . . . I have for some time been prepared to hear what you told me, and have calmly made up my mind in quiet beforehand, when unbiassed by discussion or excitement.

To the Same.

*No date.*—You may well think, without my saying more, how little anxious I am to run my head against a wall if I can help it. Still more, I fully believe much good is meant to education, and personally I am anxious to throw no obstacle in the way or to make the very responsible work of the

Commissioners more laborious. I wish in every way I can to help, not to oppose; I can sincerely say this. Neither have I any fears for the present, nor do I wish to bind the future in any absurd way. I am quite willing to face the axiom of modern politics that "the weaker must go to the wall." You will ask, then, what I do mean, and on what point I am fool enough to stake my all once more. Simply on this point "that the thorough Church of England character of the work here (established or disestablished) be fully recognised now." That a record be made that the present school rose on this faith, and on the faith that a post-Reformation basis of operations set going by a country clergyman would be a guarantee against any common changes of religious kinds. If this is distinctly laid down, and this choice clearly put before men's minds, then if any after generation chooses to undo the work, alienate, confiscate, plough up, or anything they like, let them. I don't want even to try and stop them. But let them know what they destroy or change. Provided this kind of statement is put clearly I do not care whether it has any legal value or not. I quite agree with you on the difficulty there would be in practically unchurching a school like this, and if that was all I should not care to contest the question, neither shall I resist any clause or clauses which provides for this kind of εὐθανασία. If it is to die let it die. But I myself fully think that at no distant period a complete upheaval and readjustment of all English polity is at hand, and I wish in that hour of change and violence to have the generation know distinctly what Uppingham belonged to; after that let them do what they like. This then is where I take my stand. . . . Of course if the present reform falls into the old groove, in which founders sinned, of making non-workers powerful, not giving the workers liberty, and tying dead weights round their necks, by degrees the life will go out of the new channels as it has done in so many cases from the old, but that is not my concern. I heartily wish in all things I can to forward the present reforms.

*January 1st*, 1870.—A kind letter from Lyttelton[1] to-day improving my position immensely, complaining of my viewing the Commissioners as "natural enemies," which enabled me

[1] Lord Lyttelton had been an old Eton friend of Thrings.

to put out quietly my real views, and to show him a little of the inner life of things, and how serious a matter this legislation is to working men. Yet I daresay my definite, clear views of the subject expose me to much misapprehension, and that men think I am simply cantankerous when I see great principles at stake and a blind dealing with them. One thing certainly vexes me, the cool way these governing men with their positions above the working conflict come down as *di ex machinis*, quite unconscious of the intense interest these frog pattings have for the frogs and of their own ignorance of frog life. I see how impossible it is for a Government like ours to promote good except by *stopping evil*. How dangerous it is to meddle with liberty and work! I trust this new year opens with good prospects for us. I am sure now of the personal friendship of the Commissioners, and of their willingness to be on the old footing of former days. That is much. I can now, at all events, write freely to Lyttelton if anything turns up. I shall call on him in town if I can.

### To Lord Lyttelton.

*No date.*—Pray forgive me if my letters have seemed to you to breathe irritation. I can assure you it is nothing of the kind, but, as far as it is anything, simple *fear*. If you will have patience with me I will explain a little the situation I am in; perhaps then you will look on my proceedings as, at least, not unnatural. . . .

Sixteen years ago I came here and found a good basis, but only 25 boys, and no machinery for educating *them all* up to the university point, which I was compelled to do. I will say nothing of the deadly struggle, protracted for years, which fell to my lot when I faced this difficulty. Conceive what it has been during sixteen years to meet toil and danger of every kind; then at the end of that time, just when Uppingham itself as a school was secure, its machinery complete, its whole theory and practice in thorough working order, and I was gaining a little health and strength which had suffered seriously in the long effort, all at once I find the school and myself thrown out of their quiet onward movement into a great commotion

of external power. I found in fact *my life*, with the best part of it gone, absolutely at the mercy of Parliament and this bill. You chaff me for calling myself old; in your sense, of course, I am not old, yet even in your sense I was two years ago so used up that I doubted if ever I should be well again, and at that time was in fact thoroughly *old*. Now, thank God, I am not. Yet I am old to *begin* life again, which was what I said, and to leave my harvest of all kinds for a fresh sowing on new ground. You will probably before this, as you saw the first, have seen my yesterday's letter to Roby, which goes fully into the question which would make me do that. But I feel sure now there will be no need. Yet if there was, so far from thinking "the game up," or being hasty, I should do it in the firm conviction that if I lived I should be able to raise another Uppingham on a thorough basis of independent work for Christ's Church. As to haste, I have seen the *crux* coming on for months, and have never done anything in my life with greater deliberation. Indeed a man who has spent the life of daily care and foresight I have done here never acts in haste. . . . What would you feel if you stood alone as I do here, at seeing all you cared for once more at stake? And permit me to add without any real clue to what is coming. For neither the Commission nor Parliament has as yet entered on the great trade question, of how the trade of school-keeping can be carried on so as to give to *each boy* in every school a fair chance. This is what I have lived for—the Government has not noticed it. They are busy about what subjects are to be taught before they have secured that any subject shall be taught *to every boy*, or any training be given to *every* boy. The great schools which fill the public eye, and are the most grievous sinners against this cardinal ABC of the alphabet of education, are only too glad to discuss *subjects*, and escape investigation of *machinery*. Now my whole life, work, and convictions are bound up in this trade question which at Uppingham we have dealt with and settled. I have no fortune to fall back on, nothing but my work and my life. Would it not be a matter of intense interest to you if you saw a great external power under such circumstances—a power able to crush you utterly—advancing slowly on your life? advancing on great trade questions without the personal

experience of trade, and with the great authorities on such subjects the worst offenders? This you know is my belief, whether I am right or wrong. Can you wonder at my having been afraid? Can you wonder, I may now add, at the relief your kind letter has brought me this New Year's morning? A happy omen. I can assure you from my heart, what I think you are now able to believe, that I am not in a state of irritable feeling, but as far as I now fear, calmly anxious; very much more, however, hopeful and cheery; most of all eager and glad to do everything in my power to forward the good work you are engaged in; both in public and private ready to spare no pains to make it easier. . . . There is no fear that you shall accuse me again of even seeming to look on you as "natural enemies."

### To the Same.

*No date.*—No doubt the question of private property turns up in innumerable instances in connection with foundations. Nevertheless I have the strongest reason for believing that I am not mistaken in my view of Uppingham. Other schools have, as they grew and it became possible to do so, employed private property gradually, and when any large sum has been thus invested the expenditure has been spread over several generations, and most of the original contributors are in their graves. But Uppingham is an instance of a special school system, based on most distinct principles, being begun when a school was at its lowest ebb, carried out steadily through adversity and prosperity, till all the educational work has practically become quite independent of any necessity of foundation aid, though for reasons other than pecuniary such aid seems to me very important.

This work, too, has been done in one generation, and the men still live whose property and lives have been thus contributed to the work, when most unexpectedly Government steps forward to deal with the question. In the last sixteen years I have paid much attention to these questions, and I believe I am correct in asserting that there is no other instance where this same process has been carried through, and especially in the two facts of the amount thus invested in our generation,

and that the contributors are alive the case of Uppingham is peculiar among foundation schools.

It was not so much intentional tyranny on the part of the Commissioners that he had to fear as their ignorance of the principles involved, or indifference to them. An internal danger was added. Assistant masters would be tempted, in any reconstruction of the trust, to seek better terms for themselves at the expense of the principles which he most valued. This could most easily be done by getting the restriction on the numbers in a single house removed.

After seeking advice on all sides—from the governors, from Thring himself, who gladly submitted what he thought a just and workable system, and from others—the Commissioners prepared and sent down in 1872 their draft scheme. Thring found at once that his worst fears were confirmed, that many of his main principles were ignored, and that if the scheme were adopted he could no longer consistently remain headmaster of Uppingham.

His diary becomes at this point the best guide to his feelings and views on the subject.

*November 27th*, 1872.—Truly life is hard. To-day I got down the draft scheme of our schools, and find that these men in power have truckled to the squires and left them in possession of the management of the property, which I believe to be illegal, and have not paid the slightest attention to my suggestions and claims. There are no less than three enactments left in, on any one of which I shall resign, besides sundry little things that are disgusting in a less degree. . . . These powerful and practised red-tapists, with nothing at stake, matched against poor me, with only my principles and experience, but singularly unready in the cut-and-dried statistics that pass for mastery of a subject in these days of bullying and trading in other men's thoughts, and all this in the middle

of the whirl of incessant work here. . . . I have a sufficient headache this evening to match my heartache, but no escape from the class I must take after prayers, or from the weary solitary standing at bay. I feel very much down. It is bitter having one's twenty years of working life confiscated in a London office, or able to be confiscated, and myself turned out into the cold again at the bidding of a Government like ours, with all its meanness when confronted with any popular cry, all its want of principle.

*November 28th.*—For the first time in my life I believe care kept me awake great part of the night. But, it is so wonderful, and it has occurred so often this year, I got up to read the Psalms as usual in school. Out flashed on my soul the first verse, "Lord, remember David, and all his trouble;" then the following verses describing so one's life in the main. How my heart rose as I read it! God will not forget. Then when I came out of school my gallant-hearted wife said, "She had been very down, but suddenly it came across her that God had given me a resolute heart to fight for them, and fight for Him I must; that her father had died, been hunted to death by his Government superiors for true work, and she had asked in her fear whether God was going to take her husband also, but then she thought of my resolution and was comforted; but, at all events, that we must stand hard, come weal come woe, for our truths." This is wonderfully comforting, to know that if we have to turn out we shall go as always united in the family life. . . .

I see clearly the thing must be fought out, and I am clear that on the three or four main points there can be no giving way or compromise. I told the masters this morning the draft had come, and shall show it to them to-morrow. (I had written to the office to ask the meaning of "confidential.") They are furious at the few things I told them, and well they may be, considering how jealously they fight over every brick with me, at the cool way in which the scheme gives the managers absolute power over them and theirs.

*November 29th.*—I gave the draft I drew to the masters, and we hold a meeting to-morrow. . . . I told them, what I mean to say to all to-morrow, that I wish there to be no mistake in the matter, that I felt sure there was not the slightest

danger to our present success either from Endowed School Commissioners or governors; we were quite secure, but that this was not the point I looked to. I had not worked here for twenty years to ensure this, but for the cause of education, and that for this I should now carry my point against the Commissioners or resign, but that it was well there should be no mistake in the ground taken up. But every master must judge for himself.

It struck me this afternoon how strangely like the Psalmist my life had been when he said, "Thou hast made my hill so strong I shall never be moved." These words had often come into my mind, and I had felt that though I knew God could, I did not quite see how He could overthrow the school for me, and I had felt that though I tried to be humble and to feel my weakness I did not quite succeed as I wished. I have got it now at all events.

*November 30th.*—A marvellous day—perhaps the most consciously marvellous that I have passed in my life. It goes back so far; it covers so much ground; it is such a centre-point of life backward and forward. It fills me with wonder, and, I trust, with faith too. First came the morning service in school, with its apposite and ringing psalm with its first verse. Then the Litany and Communion Service in chapel at ten. St. Andrew's Day, with its touching simple call to leave all and follow Christ. And the chapel itself, shall it be wrested from us? After chapel immediately the masters' meeting. I opened it by stating that I had that morning received a letter from Canon Robinson saying he wished the draft scheme to be kept to myself till after the governors' meeting and interview with Mr. Hammond. I said I should utterly disregard this, as I wrote to ask the question under the impression that the scheme was sent to individual governors, but if the governors, the non-workers, were to act as a body, then we, the workers, should. That the proceeding was quite of a piece with the rest of the mistaken treatment. I then began the meeting itself by stating that I thought a sober, unimpassioned conclusion ought to be arrived at by each man, and especially that there ought to be no false impression, and I wished accordingly to state my strong conviction that nothing was further from the ideas of either Commissioners or

later of governors than the intention of doing us any harm if we took their scheme, or a far worse scheme; that they would favour us, crack us up, help us, and in every way forward the material success of the school. But that was not my view. I had worked for twenty years for given principles, and there were five things at least in the scheme as a matter of principle on any one of which I would resign. Then —— said, "That was equivalent to giving in my resignation then and there. Did I think I was going to carry these points?" I said I was not going to discuss that; causes were advanced by overthrow as much as by victory sometimes. I had thought this crisis possible for years, and was now telling them what I meant to do. I had no doubt they might, with luck, be thoroughly prosperous and successful if they separated from me, accepted the scheme, and took another headmaster from the governors. I wished them to weigh this. Mr. Rowe, perhaps before this, asked, "If we all resigned with you, would you start a new school with us here? Resigning need not mean leaving." I said I would give a perfectly honest answer. "I would not do so as chief of a joint-stock company, or on any terms excepting such as an amended scheme might give." They said they had the experience of the past, and knew my terms, etc. I said, "No, I could not lead them, and would not on such terms as the past." The terms would have to be settled before I accepted their headship, and I was particularly anxious they should see this clearly, as I would not have them say by and by that I had betrayed them. The matter was very serious; there would be much subtle concession and argument; we were a large company, and each man must judge for himself. I would not bind myself in any way, and it was quite possible as matters advanced that we might be anything but a compact body. William Earle, in the course of talk, asked, as the scheme I stood out against was the Sherborne scheme, whether I blamed Harper for accepting it. I answered, "No, I judge no man; he did what he thought was right; his view was the immediate present. It is not my view. I should be an apostate if I gave up my twenty years of life and my convictions because the present is safe. Then we proceeded to the business of my stating the five points on which I would resign. I began with the refusal to let us

working men be represented by two governors. The battle-ground was the fact that we were living founders representing 95 per cent of the annual outlay and plant. . . . That we stood alone in having living representatives of capital laid out over a series of years for a principle which, to some of us at all events, was much the reverse of profitable, whereas other schools had only invested money when it was profitable to do so. . . . There was some talk whether I would accept a compromise on this. I said I was open to some compromise on this head alone, provided the rest of the scheme was thoroughly satisfactory; but if not, I was, on principle, very strong for the rights of the working men, and should not give way. Then we went through the other points. . . . I don't know what will come of it; whether masters in a body will stick to me or not. They are good men as a body, . . . and if they see the principle some of them really would face the danger for the principle's sake. Again, boldness is as safe as cowardice; they may see that. Their risk, if I fail and go, is very great indeed. At all events, I have put before them clearly in a dispassionate way the whole question. There must be great searchings of heart with them as well as with me. It will sift the worldliness which was creeping over us thoroughly and keenly.

*December 1st.*—My sermon preached, my confirmation class gone. Campbell to-day, when he came in with the alms account, gave in his adhesion. "He always meant to go if I went; he did not want to serve under any other headmaster. He could not with his family bind himself, but he certainly should not stay a moment longer than he could help if I went." This cheers me, but I am most comforted by having got out in so quiet a way without a word of discussion the broad, clear view of the choice now before them, and of my position and intentions. If they hold to the cause and to me they do so without a single expression to move their feelings or win them to my side. What a strange dream it all seems sometimes; this invisible war and great tyranny of injustice hanging over us from end to end of our horizon, whilst all the time the walls and familiar objects are the same, and school and chapel go on as if nothing was in the air.

*December 3rd.*—How it has gone to my heart of late years

to see the work and the truth of it gradually overlaid and encrusted, and anything I said of past sacrifices like words to the lotus-eaters, and more and more blindness and carping and rebellion daily, and the life of the place slipping through my fingers, and all in danger of being really only a successful speculation, instead of a living truth. And now comes this sharp sword cutting asunder all their cobwebs, and bringing them face to face with the great choice, principle, or safety, though it is more mercifully or less mercifully put than that, since principle is really the safest. . . . I trust I may conquer. I should feel more confident if the Commissioners were not so knowingly ignorant about schools. Ignorance in power cannot afford to discriminate. One sheep is the same as another to a man who is not a shepherd.

### To Lord Lyttelton.

*December 6th*, 1872.—I have no objection to telling you anything. It is with much concern that I find myself adding to the troubles of your office, and I beg you will believe that I am in every way anxious personally not to stand in the way of the Commissioners. But I have now for twenty years been slowly working up what I believe to be a truth, and I cannot betray it now. The scheme as sent down to me has sundry provisions in it under which I could not continue here as headmaster. I must explain what I mean by this. I have no fear for immediate success; as long as the school is in its present healthy, robust state all would go well externally, for the simple reason that none of the obnoxious clauses of the scheme would be brought into action. I wish, therefore, to lay down very distinctly that I am not contending in any way for my own present loss or gain when I join issue on these matters. Quite the contrary; the loss to me of resigning at my age I had rather say nothing about; the gain of staying is certain. But this is not the question. The cause I have lived for is, in my judgment, endangered; the moment I cannot continue to work for my cause, I must give way to some one who thinks differently. That I see clearly, and shall not shrink from doing it.

In its general form my position is simple. It is this.

Every great profession is full of complicated professional knowledge, and requires skilled workers of a high class.

I claim that the skilled workers, each in his own trade, shall be well represented in the management of the trade, and not interfered with by external unintelligent power in carrying on the trade. In other words, the function of governors, even if there was a provincial council to act instead of the present strange arrangement, is, in my opinion, strictly confined to seeing that the schools do their duty within certain strict laws, and no governor or council, short of the highest in the kingdom, should have absolute power to alter at will the structure and character of a school. If this is true when public money is being dealt with, it becomes an injustice of the gravest kind to violate it when a school has been re-founded, as Uppingham has been, without any fear of such interference, and has given a large amount of property to the governing body on a different understanding, and could at once, if this property, as is just, is returned when the compact is broken, cast off the foundation entirely, and even without this can do so if compelled by terms it will not and cannot submit to. There are sundry things in the scheme which practically give absolute control of the construction of the school to the governing body, and that deadest of all dead hands, the hand of living external force, can at any moment be applied to the heartstrings of the work and the workers here. My cause is lost if anything of this kind is left in the scheme. But there is no power that can compel me to pull down my life-work myself. I have thought over this subject for years and calmly made up my mind long ago. But though rather surprised at seeing none of the suggestions I had made incorporated in the scheme, I thoroughly believe that you and your colleagues will do us justice, and nothing can be further from my wish than to embarrass your very difficult and anxious task in any way that I can avoid.

*December 8th.*—Marie asked me to-day what I should do if turned out, and we just talked the matter over a little. If nothing turns up I mean, please God, to take a few little boys.

Up to this time he had been in doubt as to what the attitude of the masters as a body would be.

*December 19th.*—On Tuesday morning I received a really precious document, a paper declaring my claims as re-founder of this school, and their determination to back me to the best of their power, signed by all the masters. I wrote short notes to Rowe and Earle saying I would send an official answer next day, and thanking them. O what a change that was! how grateful M—— and A—— and I felt! . . .

The document here referred to was as follows:—

*December 16th*, 1872.—We, the undersigned masters of Uppingham School, considering

(1) That Mr. Thring has been headmaster for nearly twenty years;

(2) That when he came the school consisted of about 25 boys, and that it now consists of about 400;

(3) That from the first the school has been worked at great risk and expense upon definite principles, considered by Mr. Thring and by all of us to be of vital importance, and that to the working of these principles the success of the school is due;

(4) That of the present school buildings the Trust has contributed 8¾ per cent, and Mr. Thring and his masters 91¼ per cent;

(5) That the school is thus virtually a new foundation and Mr. Thring the founder;

(6) That "the efficiency of a system depends for the most part upon the living power that sets and keeps it in motion" (Bishop Fraser), and that this living power cannot be created, but may easily be destroyed, by a scheme imposed *ab extra;*

are strongly of opinion that Mr. Thring's judgment on the new scheme has a special claim upon the respect of the Commissioners, and are ready to back him to the best of our power on all points of the scheme which he considers to be of vital importance.

But assistance soon afterwards came from a quarter whence Thring had little expected it.

*February 23rd.*—A wonderful day! a day that repays years

of toil, besides the calm confidence and hope it gives for the future. It is as if a great door had opened out of a narrow passage and shown me suddenly the hidden things of life behind me and in front. Mr. Jacob from Liverpool and Mr. Lowndes have been here. They have only had boys here this half-year, but it is impossible for me to give any idea of the earnestness and zeal they show, or of the way the school has caught hold of them and their friends. It was like a dream hearing Mr. Jacob talk of the consternation that the thought of Uppingham being broken up had caused; how the Nonconformists had declared themselves ready to do anything; and, in fact, the wonderful effect that the quiet work here has had. They are ready to get up at once a parents' memorial; I am to send them the addresses. Mr. Lowndes, who is a great lawyer, will see to managing everything in that way that may be required. Mr. Jacob is going to see Canon Robinson to-morrow about us. If it is necessary, they will fight the matter in both Houses of Parliament; they have sounded their members who will undertake it. In Manchester people are working with them, so that I find a great and powerful confederacy able to force almost anything rising out of the work itself as if by a magician's wand. "Why are ye so fearful, O ye of little faith?" Indeed, how I deserve this reproach. My King has never left me to be a prey. All this trial is developing greater life and power, and brightening what seemed to be so dreary. As for me I cannot realise it. To hear the deep feeling with which Mr. Jacob talked of the school almost made me feel as if I was an impostor, and that he would find me out, and so indeed I am, if that was all, and I might well fear; but the Master I serve is no impostor, and His work will not be found out, and as I have worked for Him I feel there is truth even if it is not in me. Mr. Jacob said he would finish by telling Canon Robinson "that if the Commissioners broke up Uppingham by forcing me to resign, they would carry off the boys and found it anew elsewhere, and leave them empty walls only. . . ."

What strength and comfort has come to me out of this trial! How bright the past looks when I see what fathers, men of such sense and power, think of it; and how deeply they feel, and how earnestly they support the work! How

the future brightens with such assurance of God's blessing; how small my cares look; how rich the recompense; how worthy of any labour! . . . How it strengthens me for to-morrow, and makes my position with the governors one of independence and patronising rather than being patronised!

*March 1st.*—Another week over; a wonderful time. Whatever comes of it a new world has opened up for me—a certainty of security and power and blessing on work unknown before. So the Israelites after all their trial and backslidings in the wilderness must have felt on the evening of their first great battle won. Then the dim feelings and sad lessons and half-perceived truths and gathering faith must have had a birth hour into conscious strength and perception of God on earth as well as in heaven. I trust I have felt it before, but do feel as I never have before that the victory is in my hands now. May God give me strength to bear it and to feel it more and more. If I could but tell what I know of God's love and Christ's glory.

*March 22nd.*—It is settled by my allies to try and overthrow the scheme entirely on Church grounds. I am so thankful that this which I thought impossible is to be done. God has raised up a power to do it. It seemed so hard that my life here should be confiscated without redress, and all my labour in this place for Christ's Church robbed, and in case we are disestablished this claimed as State property. But whatever happens this will not be done quietly. The masters are frantic at my determination to follow the Liverpool advice and fight for the overthrow of the scheme, and not send in any emendations. If beaten they say then we must take the old scheme unaltered. But I see clearly to send in an amended scheme for acceptance in case the Church question is decided against us is telling them that we shall not resist to the uttermost an adverse decision, and is not fighting to win. Our cause, too, is wonderfully strong when once it gets a hearing, and cannot be despised. The parents' memorial is to be sent in to Canon Robinson, who is quite glad to receive it. I believe myself they want a justification for treating us differently from their cut-and-dried pattern, and I know their feelings are friendly.

*May 1st.*—This morning (may it be an omen) the summons

to meet the Commissioners next Wednesday came. God give me wisdom and strength to do His will. J. H. Green was here yesterday to report over his examination by the Committee of the House of Commons. He tells me they ask much about Uppingham, and give out that the Commissioners will settle with us, and that we have no intention of coming to a rupture or fighting. We shall see. I don't understand it unless they mean either to yield entirely, which I don't think, or believe that they can talk or bribe me into compliance. They will find their mistake.

The interview with the Commissioners took place on 7th May, and he reports its results a few days later.

To W. T. JACOB.

THE SCHOOL HOUSE, UPPINGHAM,
*12th May* 1873.

I will now give you a little gossip about my interview. When I went in, after taking my seat, almost immediately Lord Lyttelton blurted out that it was clear we had no *locus standi* under the Bill to be made an exception, and they quoted the governors' memorial, and proceeded to argue there was no present danger in the present scheme. I said to this that I wished to state at once that I apprehended no present danger either on Church or on other matters; that I felt sure in my day the school would go on under a far worse scheme than the one in my hand perfectly satisfactorily. But I wished before I said another word to state distinctly that I was not contesting anything in my own interest, quite the contrary, but with a view to the future, and to times when the school might be weak. Then Lyttelton pressed me whether I thought we had any *legal claim* under the Bill. I answered to the effect that I was not there to pass judgment, or even to express any opinion on legal claims; that I was not there to state our case, our just demands, and what we were prepared to do. It was for others to decide on this legally; it was their part, not mine, to consider that question. Then they began pressing me about the legal view. I answered to the effect that we considered

both on the terms of the original foundation (which I went into), and also on the terms of my work in faith on that basis we had an irresistible claim in equity to be considered; that we were prepared to fight this claim step by step, and in every possible way bring forward our just right both in Parliament and elsewhere.

There was some discussion about the effect of the present scheme and the unlikelihood of any alteration of the Church character in consequence. I answered that I would state candidly that if I was sure that the Church of England would not be disestablished, I should be willing to trust to the spirit of the place, the spirit of the country, the chapel, and unseen powers; but that if the Church was disestablished, it was clear that any school which had its connection with the Church broken off now, would be seized at once by the State then as *ipso facto* already State property, and that was worth contending for.

Lyttelton here broke in brusquely, "That is speculative and a great jump." I answered, "Perhaps; but these are days of jumping; we are getting familiar with great jumps, and it is necessary to provide for jumps in these jumping days." He said, "Do you mean to say you will go on even if you are not one of the exceptions provided for in the Bill?" I answered, "Certainly we should." He said, "That is like running your head against a wall." I answered that that was exactly what we meant to do; we were going to run our heads against a wall if necessary. Then or soon after he left, and Canon Robinson and Roby continued the discussion.

Roby said in the course of the argument he could not understand how we differed from other schools, Rugby, for example, where all the houses were private property also. I explained that at Rugby and at similar schools, when the school had flourished, it had been found advantageous to build houses, and thus in a generation or two the school became great because it was profitable, and that the original speculators in building were all or most of them dead and passed away before the school attained its greatness; but that at Uppingham I had started the school on a given principle to work out my belief in honest work, and had worked it at a great loss through evil days with those who joined me; that any man of

business who would examine the question would see that when I began on the plan I did begin on, if that plan was persisted in, and it has been persisted in, no possible success could be so successful as the going on on the plan of the old scheme, without risk, whilst to fail was to be ruined; that this system and school had been completed by me in one generation, and I was there to claim this. Canon Robinson summarised this argument in a very neat sentence. "I see," he said, "at Rugby the school made the houses, and at Uppingham the houses made the school." "Exactly so," I said; "that represents the pivot of the thing completely." Then Roby objected that Mr. Gathorne Hardy had stated before the Committee of the House that there had been a new endowment of £70,000, whereas only £13,000 had been given to the Trust, and all the rest was private property. I answered to this effect, that even put in the way in which he put it, it was fair to throw in my twenty years of life and all the money I had sunk in working the school up to its present state, though I had not a brick to show for it; and also that there was another way of putting it. I would remind him that if he took the school the whole working power of the school was ours. That the statutes had required work to be done, which could not be done honestly in my judgment, and had virtually taken a partner, and in what partnership would 9 per cent give the right to deal with absolute power with the other 91 per cent of the firm. He said great respect was no doubt due to us, but he still harped on the endowment and the £13,000 only. I then said, "Suppose we put it in another way, and say if you give us back what we have given to the Trust and allow us to pay the balance on the schoolroom of £3000, we will give you no more trouble; we will throw up the endowment at once, and start to-morrow on our own basis." Canon Robinson then smiled and said, "A mutual friend of ours, Mr. Thring (you), did come to me the other day and ask whether it was not possible to buy out the foundation, and proposed to do it." "Yes," I said; "that is the true way of putting the case." "But what about the exhibitions," said Roby, "which you laid such store by?" "Oh," I said, "the exhibitions are nothing to us, we can re-establish them to-morrow." "Can you?" said he. "Yes," I answered, "in a matter of that

kind I command the market absolutely and should not have the slightest difficulty." "Then," he said, "you don't care for the endowment." "Not from that point of view in the least," I answered; "but I care intensely for the good man's foundation, the antiquity, the old house; the spirit and all the language of the past to which I attach such importance in education, and believe in so much."

This pretty well finished the discussion on the Church question, and as you know I accepted their proposals conditionally on their being satisfactory to you and the friends who had supported me.

The discussion that followed on the management clauses was not nearly so important in one sense, because all the arguments about the position and claims of the school had already been settled. At last I succeeded in bringing out clearly that if the skilled workmen, taking a series of years, could not do their own work, most certainly unskilled external power could not; I explained also that I did not want to make the professional man the ultimate judge, but simply to throw the responsibility of working well on him, when the kind of work to be done had been assigned. That then the instrument must work in its own way, and bad laws well carried out in such a case were better than good laws badly carried out; that I acted on that principle with my assistant masters in letting them work, and I claimed the same liberty for myself; and I made a strong distinction between supervision which I admitted, and interference and power of initiating and prescribing which I said nothing should ever induce me to work under. The upshot was the doctrine of non-interference and supervision was admitted, and they declared themselves ready to modify all the obnoxious clauses.

The latter part of the conference, which lasted a clear two hours, was exceedingly friendly, the first half-hour or so was slightly gladiatorial.

I should very much like now to have the scheme pressed on, and I am very pleased you and my other friends think, as I do, that if they carry out their Wednesday's work in the new draft scheme, we have gained all we have fought for. But in case there should still be difficulty and any backing out or change I should not like the pressing on of the scheme to

seem in any way to come from me, as they might use such a fact against me if any sharp practice is still in store. I don't think there is, but it is best to make sure.

Once more a thousand thanks for all your support, which has, I may truly say, completely altered the whole world and its bearings for me at this trying time, and cheered and strengthened me wonderfully.

There was still a long and troublesome path to travel over, but in the end the chief points for which Thring contended were embodied in the constitution of the school. Its church character was maintained; the masters secured due representation on the governing body; the internal management of the school was not given to amateur rulers, but to the headmaster and his staff—the skilled workers. The final settlement of the question came during the storm and stress of the great migration to Borth. In the pressure of difficulties which came upon him at that time Thring was more careless about his own business interests in the school than of the great principles on which it was conducted.

His energy, zeal, and organising capacity had built up a great school; he had not merely sacrificed time and strength, but he had risked his own means in placing it on a firm foundation. If ever man had a right to reap the practical fruits of success, Thring had. But in his anxiety to safeguard fundamental principles this was little thought of.

Meanwhile, it cheered him to feel that the strong stand which he had taken for Uppingham would make the future safer for other schools.

To W. F. Rawnsley, Esq.

Ben Place.

*July 5th*, 1873.—I have no doubt that Uppingham, as you say, furnished the backbone, for the simple reason that no

other school either could or would hold out on any distinct principle. It was with them a mere scramble for a little more money, or a little more patronage in a blind way, with no solid power of intelligent, unselfish knowledge. If we had given way, everything else was limp, and all would have been lost. I felt very strongly the cause of true education and skilled work was at stake; and probably far more than we are at all aware of, the fact of Uppingham standing firm for principle has been a turning-point, so far at least as the preventing an unresisted downward drag, and suggesting that there was a true principle of school life of a definite kind. It was worth any risk to uphold at this epoch intelligent views which were real and could not be talked down. On the most important points of school management all the great schools had already given way and quietly accepted the dead hand of ignorant external power, and the dead weight of the idea that the skilled workman can be told by such potentates how he is to do his own skilled work. This is deadly. To prevent this is a cause worth fighting for, and now I can breathe again. I thank God for the past year with all its pain, and revelations, and shaking. There will be more life, more strength, better work for it. I have appointed Mr. Bagshawe now at Repton to Witts's house. He seems, and is said to be, an admirable man.

# CHAPTER VII

## THE HEADMASTERS' CONFERENCE

THE Conference of the headmasters of public schools has now become a body of recognised influence in England; the deliberations at its annual or biennial gatherings are watched with deep interest by the public and seriously discussed by all the leading journals: it is the only common channel through which the secondary school life of the country finds a voice for its opinions—the only parliament in which its perplexities can be discussed, the experience of masters compared, the relations of the public schools to the educational movements of the time considered. Doubtless the significance and weight of the Conference are fluctuating quantities, and at any particular period will be determined by the activity of educational thought and progressive spirit, or the amount of individual energy among its members. Whether it has quite fulfilled, as a stimulant to educational movement, the hopes of its founder may be questioned. But that it has broken down a deadening isolation, induced a healthy interchange of ideas between public schools, given them a united voice in time of need, exercised a powerful influence on various educational questions, and that it is capable of much further development for good, there

can be no reasonable doubt. Within a few years of its inception it had secured the adhesion of all the great schools, and at its meetings was being welcomed and splendidly entertained by each of the most important of them in turn.

But when the organisation of the Conference was first suggested by Thring, the welcome which the idea received was by no means universal, as I shall have to show. The inception and growth of the plan in his mind can be pretty fully traced in his Diary and in fragments of correspondence. It was suggested by a meeting of masters called for a special purpose. In the recollections of Thring which Bishop Mitchinson has furnished, his Lordship thus mentions this meeting and its result:—

> We were brought into contact on another interesting question,—a *rapprochement* destined to produce far-reaching results. The Endowed Schools Bill was before Parliament: it contained important provisions of a somewhat drastic character, largely concerning the future of grammar schools, and the fortunes of their masters; no common action was being taken, and none seemed likely to be taken. Although, therefore, I was but an insignificant member of the craft, I ventured to invite a considerable number of my brother head-masters to meet at the Freemasons' Tavern in London. The meeting was well and influentially attended: we discussed the bill, framed resolutions, and by deputation interviewed Mr. Forster, then Vice-President of the Council. At the close of the second meeting to receive the report of the deputation, Thring rose and, after commenting on the utility and pleasantness of such a gathering, proposed that it should become an annual institution, and then and there invited the first Public Schools Conference to Uppingham the following December. At Uppingham we met in the cruellest winter weather; but it was forgotten in the hospitality we experienced, and in the interest that was aroused and sustained throughout the gathering. I travelled down in company with Dr. Welldon,

then headmaster of Tonbridge; as we traversed the dreary, sodden, mist-clad country he kept repeating at intervals, "Thring must be a wonderful man to have made a school like this in the midst of such a howling wilderness"!

We may now turn to his own views in connection with the preliminary meeting to which reference has been made, and the motives which influenced him in taking a further and more decisive step.

*February 25th*, 1869.—This afternoon, on coming out of third school, found a letter from Mitchinson of Canterbury, wanting the headmasters of the endowed schools to meet in Oxford or London, and confer about the proposed bill, but I have written to say I cannot go. I like Mitchinson, but the fact is, first, much as I disapprove of the Government move, yet my objections do not belong so much to the bill itself as to the muddle they have made in glorifying the seven schools; and in the second Commission not raising the question even of what is a good school. . . . But then there is no opening for expressing this. Then, on the other hand, I suppose of the men who will meet not one really fully agrees with my school views, many are deeply pledged against them, so I don't want to identify Uppingham and myself with them. Lastly, as Uppingham stands alone, I must either lead or be in a false position, and as I am sure I should not lead in such a Conference, I can at least avoid being in a false position. All this I have more or less discussed in my afternoon's walk with E—— and M—— to-day. The fact is, for many months I have turned over every contingency in my mind, and see no possible chance of anything but sitting still and working on quietly as long as we are left alone, as nothing but an amount of power which no one will dream of offering to one so insignificant as myself would make any other course wise. But we will not forecast too much; "sufficient for the day." There is here a noble progressive work. As long as that remains nothing more is needed.

*February 26th*.—More trouble about this horrid school bill. A letter from Walter, the M.P. for Berks, the *Times*

man, who was at Eton with Witts and me, about the proposed exams. This enabled me to put out my views partly, but took a great deal of trouble. In the afternoon a very good printed letter from Harper of Sherborne, wanting to have a deputation to Mr. Forster or Mr. Powell on the great injustice of putting the leading endowed schools on so servile a footing, while they exempt so many, and those the greatest. I agree with him thoroughly except in the deputation. But I foresee much labour of hand and head coming out of all this; indeed this has been a very hard week as it is, mainly on this account, and my heart is troubled.

*February 27th.*—Wrote to Harper, telling him he might have my name for his propositions, but that I would not personally attend a deputation.

*March 1st.*—A day I fear much to be remembered by me. A letter this morning from Mitchinson with a strong personal appeal to me to attend the meeting in London to-morrow. And so all my well-considered arguments are beaten down, and I cannot think it right not to go and say my say, and perhaps I launch out into a sea, and this is the last night of unmolested work I may pass for years—unmolested in spirit. I feel a solemn dread mixed with the excitement of change. And I bless God for having allowed me external rest to carry through the deadly struggle here, and then giving me a pause, a calm for a little time to recover strength and nerve before the certain vexation and possible great and trying conflict now before me has come on. To-night I am here quiet, to-morrow the one step forward on a possible new life in many ways is taken. I hate, too, the thought of this external battle, and yet I do not see how a man can shirk it. May God guide me and shield my head as of old; "O God, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle."

*March 3rd.*—Back from London. Much pleased at having gone. Found twenty-five or twenty-six of the best masters there—Mitchinson, Harper, and others, and on the whole the meeting was very satisfactory. I never saw so little time wasted, and on the whole so much good sense shown. I was very much struck with the general appearance and behaviour of the men. A deputation is to wait on Mr. Forster next week. I shall not go unless Mitchinson wants me to under-

take some special thing. We passed sundry resolutions and made suggestions. I feel a sense of support, if nothing else, from having met those men.

*March 4th.*—Wrote to Mitchinson saying I was glad I had gone, and suggesting that we should combine and have an annual meeting at Christmas, taking each time some one of our schools as the place of rendezvous, I receiving them at Uppingham this year. I hope this will be approved, as we want more communion and intercourse.

*March 12th.*—Came back from London to-day. The deputation was received very courteously, and seems satisfactory. But by far the most satisfactory thing to me was that I have got a school congress to meet every year at a school, and next Christmas at Uppingham (D.V.) the first will be held. May God bless this great working step. All the masters present signed the paper agreeing to this, so sufficient weight has been gained to make it certain. This may and will, please God, be the beginning of a great work, which may have more beneficent power than any Acts of Parliament. May God help us.

*March 13th.*—Not quite so fast. A letter to-day from Dr. West of Brentwood, saying that he signed the paper, as he thought a congress good, but he and sundry others desired to meet in London. As this would in my opinion frustrate to a great degree the whole object, I wrote to say that if this was the general opinion, as my only wish was the good of education, I would drop the project at once; that I had forwarded his letter to Mr. Harper, and if he and Dr. Mitchinson agreed with him he had better combine with them to carry out the plan.

*March 15th.*—Uppingham and one or two other schools mentioned by Walter in his speech on Mr. Forster's bill, as equally good with the seven schools "to say the least." I have not seen the speech yet. . . . I don't wish to get classed with the seven schools for many things. I sympathise with those below, not with those above, and I should work to aid them.

*March 20th.*—Sent off to-day a schedule of school classification to Mr. Forster. I daresay it will go into the waste-paper basket, though it deserves attention. No other plan is true. Also to Harper; I wonder what he will say to it.

*March 23rd.*—I had a most satisfactory note from Mr. Forster himself to-day, saying he would take my paper with him during the Easter holiday and study it carefully. Now, whatever comes of it I feel more at ease, *liberavi animam meam.* If it is to be, well, and if it is not to be, I hope still I can honestly say, well.

*April 4th.*—Solemn thoughts in my heart to-night about this great new epoch opening before me in school life. Perchance I may be spared much additional temptation and left to work my work fairly quietly, perchance I may be drawn into the whirling stream of conflicting interests and ignorance, as I seem to be getting. God help me. Let me not perish in prosperity and temptations of vanity after having got through the hard agony of those ten years. God help me and mine.

*October 22nd.*—A very useful and cheering letter from Harper this morning. He wishes me to try and get masters of all kinds together at Christmas, so I have prepared a missive to-day and sent it to be printed, and hope to get it off next week. It is a bold stroke. I think I am sure of enough acceptances to make it a beginning, even if the great schools hold off. May God bless it.

*October 29th.*—To-day sent off all my invitations to the headmasters; two, Rugby and Rossall, kept back, as the places are vacant. I wonder how the schools will answer. I am not thin-skinned about it. If they won't combine they won't. If they will, my position as the leading school under this bill makes me the fittest person to send out a summons.

The circular thus sent out, and which outlined his ideas about the Conference and its aims, is as follows :—

THE SCHOOL HOUSE, UPPINGHAM,
*23rd October* 1869.

The whole question of education and school is exciting much attention.

Government is dealing with school bye laws recently passed, other measures are contemplated, and future Governments will most assuredly take up the question.

Nothing has been more remarkable than the absence of any decided voice from the great body, whose work is being handled by external power.

Yet a profession, involving experience and practice of the most varied and intricate kind, ought not to be without a common voice under such circumstances.

The reasons of this difficulty are not far to seek. The pressure of continuous heavy work, and the wide area over which schools are scattered, are the two most obvious.

The first obstacle must remain; but the second can at least be mitigated, if not entirely removed, by choosing alternately a school north and south of London as a place of meeting. This plan also gives, year by year, new interest and practical knowledge of what is being done in different parts of England.

It is proposed, therefore, to hold a meeting, annually, of headmasters of schools, at the beginning of the Christmas holidays. Sundry important schools have assented to this plan. I invite, therefore, your attendance on Wednesday and Thursday 22nd and 23rd Dec., at Uppingham, to consult as to what is best to be done.

After this the place of meeting will be decided, each year, on the plan mentioned above.

It is proposed to discuss school questions in such a manner as may be determined at the first meeting.

The first meeting will proceed to draw up rules for the admission of members and other points of management, or will appoint a Committee to do so.

Accommodation and entertainment will be provided for the headmasters that attend in the various schoolhouses.

That the idea of a Conference for the free discussion of school subjects jarred on the isolated habits and conservative tendencies of the greater schools especially was soon evident. The numerous refusals received proved that the Conference would have to justify its own existence. A few extracts from the answers of the most prominent headmasters will serve to indicate the coolness with which the movement was regarded :—

"I beg to thank you for the notice of the masters' meeting you kindly sent to me a few days ago. I am sorry I shall not be able to come to it this year. And if I could have managed it, I should have had to ask you to allow me to delay my answer, as though I feel very strongly that the schoolmaster's voice ought to be heard, I am not yet sure that an annual conference will do best what is needed."

. . . "I am rather doubtful whether an annual meeting of headmasters is likely to lead to much practical good, and as at present advised do not think that I should care to take part in one. At the same time, I am very much obliged to you for giving me the opportunity."

. . . "I am much ashamed of not having sooner replied to your kind circular. I doubt on the whole whether I shall ever be able to attend the proposed meetings, so strongly do I value the perfect rest of the holidays and the privilege of complete independence in dealing (so far as —— is concerned) with such educational difficulties as may arise. At the same time I can imagine that the suggested discussions may be of great service to many schools, and if any report of them is published I should read it with much interest."

"I beg to thank you for your invitation to Uppingham . . . but I am unable to accept your invitation, feeling as I do that it is not federal action that is needed, and that a common voice is at present impossible."

"I have not much stomach for councils. You cannot get them œcumenical, and if you could, their decisions would still often be less wise than they should be. However, there was a time when they were more natural and useful for the exchange of opinion than they are now, when the channels of communication are so many. Thanking you, therefore, for your invitation to attend a meeting of schoolmasters to be held at Uppingham in December, I do not propose to avail myself of it."

"After the first School Commission, I and the other people who were then put on the rack held some meetings, chiefly in reference to the Grammar which was adopted; beyond this we had no great results, and I was not encouraged to expect great results from such meetings. However, I trust you will be more successful . . . I shall be much

interested to hear what is done . . . I do not myself find any great difficulty in ascertaining what others are doing, so far as it is important for me to know it; and for the purpose of placing such knowledge within the reach of all, I think the scheme of Forster's 2nd bill, with the addition of a minister of Education, and reports annually published, would be much the most satisfactory method of learning what was really being done in the way of education through the country."

Speaking to the Association of headmistresses eighteen years later about the small beginnings of the Conference, and of the response to his first invitation, he said :—

It was called together after much searching of heart, from a deep conviction that all the skill of the skilled workmen of English schools was truly lying, like the seed in the parable, scattered by the wayside for the birds of the air to peck at and devour, and for amateur authority to trample under foot. All lay helpless; there was no defence, no union, no central life that could speak and move. Any risk was better than this. So with many misgivings, with a very resolute and yet very cowardly heart, that meeting was called together. Between sixty and seventy invitations were sent out, and twelve finally came.

The excuses were various, and a curious study. How often in my working life have I been reminded of Ovid's line: "Spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur ut ipsae." For how are the judges judged, especially when inspecting their inferiors, as they think, and dealing out self-satisfied superiority with complacent skill. Well, twelve came. And we can glory at this hour that only twelve came—so big a tree has now grown out of it, and so many branches on every side.[1]

Nothing was further from Thring's thoughts than that the Conference should grow into an arbiter of school methods or a censor of existing systems. Of

[1] Address to Headmistresses, June 16th, 1887.

this he was compelled later to give decisive proof. In order to remove any such impression, and to define the real purpose of the Conference, he added a note to the agenda paper sent out for the first meeting:—

The headmasters have been asked to come together under no idea of a single meeting being any great good, but in the hope that year by year the seeing different schools, learning each other's difficulties, hearing the views of thoughtful, educated men, making acquaintance with one another, and enjoying a little intercourse, may tend in time to bring about, if not a common consent on main points, at least a kindly feeling and readiness to give help and counsel.

AGENDA

*Questions*

1. Shall a school body be formed, or not, to meet annually at a school?
2. Shall this body consist of a certain number of members—30, 40, 50? or be unlimited in number?
3. Shall all kinds of schools be eligible?
4. How shall members be elected?
5. What should be the constitution of governing bodies of schools?
6. What is the best way of applying an endowment?
7. The Endowed Schools Bill, No. 2.

*Dec. 18th.*—Now the masters' meeting is close at hand. I am well satisfied at the men who are coming. All the best endowed schools. This is an excellent beginning if anything is to come to it. . . .

I think the school is in very sound heart. This cheers me. The masters coming on Tuesday are: Harper—Sherborne; Pears—Repton; Welldon—Tunbridge; G. Butler—Liverpool; Wratislaw—Bury; Stokoe—Richmond; Blore—Bromsgrove; Wood—Oakhan; Mitchinson—Canterbury; Grignon—Felsted; Sanderson; Dyne—Highgate; Jessopp—Norwich; Carver—Dulwich. These will actually appear

unless something unforeseen occurs. May God keep us all, and give us wisdom, and support and strengthen me in all dangers and difficulties.

*Dec. 24th.*—The day come and gone, and most successful. Θεῷ δόξα. On Wednesday morning I felt a unit; on Thursday morning a power, so completely has even this meeting altered things. Thirteen of us met on Wednesday, though two or three were not there at first. We met at ten, and I made a short address, explaining my views, and we debated on the formation of our . . . till one, when we lunched, and afterwards lionised till four. Two great dangers we escaped: one, Dr. —— wished to make concession to try and bring in the great schools, and tack us on to them. I laid down plainly that I thought it was simple death to do so; we rested on our vitality and work, they on their prestige and false glory: if they would meet us on common ground, well and good; if not, not. Dr. —— was very courteous, and so that danger passed. The other was when I proposed Sherborne as the next place of meeting. . . . When young, one thinks one's feelings are as sincere as they are strong, God wills it to make us work; when older one finds out partly how false hearted one is, and fears one is much worse than one expects, and a horror creeps up lest the seeming holy power one gains be apples of Sodom full of human frailty and dust, and the hearts one sways, and the high words one speaks, and the works one works, and which grow and influence and sway, be also corrupt and poison in a subtle way—all the more subtle because they seem good. O God, it is a wondrous thing to work for Thee, a thing full of grace and fear and love, and confidence and weakness, and all contradictions and searchings of heart. Only do thou accept me and this work. O Christ, purify and bless Thy work in us. Make us a brotherhood to be a light in England; lift us not up, O Lord, as beacons, but as a saving clear light. . . Make us Thine in these days of doubt and danger. . . . On the Thursday we discussed the school bill, and broke up, all of us much strengthened and encouraged. A happy Christmas Eve; my little G—— so bright, and everything bright.

Thring was always anxious to acknowledge the great

part taken in the foundation of the Conference by his friend Dr. Harper, in whose social tact and organising skill he found a most nccessary supplement to his own enthusiasm. Of the second meeting of the Conference he makes this note: —

*Jan. 10th*, 1871.—Returned yesterday from our visits at Sherborne, Hornblotton, and Clevedon. The meeting at Sherborne a splendid success. Harper, as I expected, did it in first-rate style. Mrs. Harper also admirable. Every one felt the gain of the social intercourse. The seven school delusion broken up. Winchester and Shrewsbury there; Eton has joined since. A committee formed to look after school interests. In fact a great power is certainly started. May God bless its workings. I was very much struck with the superior style of the numerous masters present.

He watched with deepest interest the widening influence of the Conference, as it won general acceptance, and held its gathering at Winchester, Dulwich, Eton, Harrow, Marlborough, and other schools. In 1875 he writes to a friend :—

"*Ben Place, Grasmere, July 9th.*—I sent you sundry lucubrations; amongst them the Conference Report. I was not at the Conference. My dear old father died that week: Not very much was done. . . . But the Conference has done good work, and, if nothing more, has shown the possibility of calling together the schools in the hour of danger. Most of all though, perhaps, it has utterly broken up the exclusiveness of the old schools, and created a feeling of friendliness and union among all schoolmasters. This in itself is a stupendous gain.

Reformer though he was, questions arose in the Conference from time to time on which he took the most resolutely conservative stand. He steadily resisted, for instance, a proposal to admit assistant masters to full membership, on the ground that those finally responsible for a school could alone rightly have voice

and vote in a teachers' parliament. On this point his opinion prevailed.

In 1878 a more serious difficulty arose. It is worthy of mention, as illustrating his view of the necessary limitation to the functions of the Conference, and his method of individual action when a principle was at stake. In the agenda paper for 1878 a motion for applying to the Universities for exemption from learning Greek had been put down for consideration in the committee, of which Thring was a member.

"I have written to Moss," he notes in his Diary on Nov. 8th, 1878, "to ask him whether we shall oppose it in committee or let it come on, and then take the sense of the Conference on the advisability of never permitting any question affecting the fundamental structure of school education to be discussed at our heterogeneous meetings. If this latter takes place and the amendment is lost, I shall resign my committee place and leave the Conference. But perhaps we shall weather this storm as many others."

The result of the meeting of the committee held to decide the question is best told in his own words :—

*Nov. 27th.*—Well, Jex-Blake voted with Moss and me because he thought these burning questions would lead to the disruption of the Conference. I, warmly supported by Moss, argued first that we were not a fit body to deal with questions of structure and dissect one another's schools, and I said that such a question as the Greek question would close the mouths of all men who like me believed it rested on differences of school structure, and that it was idle to talk of the benefit of discussion where the real question could not be discussed. I also said that we had no forms of proceeding for such discussions, and that if we had to make a shuttlecock for a couple of hours' talk of the inheritance of centuries which we held in trust it was entirely false in principle, and that we had no time. But they had made up their minds and we were outvoted,

and the subject stands first for discussion. Then I meant to have moved an amendment, to test the Conference whether it would not refuse to discuss such questions of main structure. But I was cleverly dodged then by its being taken out of the list of resolutions, and merely put as a subject for discussion without voting, so I have to-day sent in the resignation of my seat on the committee, with a request that the President will acquaint the Conference, as is their due, with my reason for declining to serve them. Nothing else was left. I am, of course, very sorry, but for years I have made up my mind never to sit in company with men engaged in work on a false basis with no power to stop it. I am convinced much of the harm of the world has been done by men continuing to give their presence to things they are powerless to stop. I am curious to know how my resignation will work. No doubt I shall be soundly abused by some, but it will test how far the Conference is disposed to go, and will be a strong pull up whether they heed it or not. I think, too, it will be a warning to the committee . . . for the Conference may resent an action which turned me out without appeal to them. . . .

*Nov. 30th*, 1878.—I received an exceedingly thoughtful, kindly note from Jex-Blake, asking me not to be too much put out by the committee meeting. So kindly and so thoughtful that I answered him fully, giving him as clearly as I could in a letter my main principles and line of action. How that man has grown on me as an honourable, thoughtful, true man! . . . The more I have seen of him and the more intimate we have become, the more reason I have found to honour and like him.

*Dec. 2nd.*—A letter from Butler this morning suggesting a compromise, which I would gladly have accepted last Tuesday before I had resigned, but I have pointed out to him I could not consent to argue the case with a sort of appeal *ad misericordiam*, and I must now let things run their course. Another from Moss, which I answered at length, showing him how impossible it was that I could go to this Conference, and that the Conference itself had the matter in its own hands, that in its present state the question was one of skilful play, and that it would be fatal to put myself and my cause in a

false position, which I should do if I fired off my heavy gun in the air by withdrawing my resignation, and then appeared hampered by all that had passed to argue the case. I have done my best, and I shall wait with much curiosity the issue. One good thing must come of it. If I do not win, at all events I shall not be hurried violently down the steep place into the sea from not having got out of the way in time. Year by year I have felt the downward slide more and more without being able to see how to avoid it. But everything in its time. If on a right tack, wait, and all by degrees unravels.

### To Dr. Jex-Blake.

*Nov. 29th*, 1878.—I thank you very much for your letter. I really feel it deeply as a fresh proof of what I have long been aware of, our real friendship. I like it all the more because we do differ on this Greek question. Why shouldn't we? If a man is honest and in earnest, why, the world is wide enough, and I think but little of minds that cannot go out of their own groove, and accept many differences without hindrance. If it was only the Greek question I should feel no trouble. Or if I had not been in office, I should have held my tongue and seen a Boojum (*vide* Snark). I can assure you that I am quite incapable of feeling pique or perturbation. I have looked steadily in the face of ruin for so many years of my life that it takes a great deal really to move me: ruin not only of all my fortunes, but, far worse than that, of all my hopes and dreams. I should not stir a hair's-breadth simply for a defeat. The lost battle is always before my eyes as the only possible fate for new truths, or, rather, old truths in really new shapes. I never speak—or very, very rarely—my inner mind. Few know silence more than I do, whatever people may think. I say this because your real friendship makes me let out some of the life within, and to explain my present action. I have resigned my seat on the committee, and under no circumstances shall I attend the present Conference. I shall be guided as to future attendance by what takes place this time. This resignation has nothing to do with the Greek question by itself. I don't think I shall stop the downhill rush, nor do

I vex about it. I am not general carpenter of the universe, with a roving commission to timber up all the holes that are made. But many years ago I arrived at the conviction that much of the worst harm is done by men continuing to act on a false basis, and being dragged along by majorities as representatives of the overthrow of their cause. I determined never to be in this predicament. And as I conceive our discussion of questions which involve the dissecting one another's schools is such a false basis, I cannot be present at such meetings. My whole soul revolts from attacking other men and their work. I think it wrong. At the same time, to be supposed to be defeated when only gagged is not gratifying; and, as I said, entire withdrawal seems to me the only course open when there is a false basis. The committee in preventing an appeal to the Conference first left me no choice but resignation. I hope I may only be excluded for this time, but I am not sanguine. It is well that things should take their natural course. I can assure you that it is the admission of questions which cannot be honestly discussed which drives me out,—nothing else in the world. I fear I have tired your patience, but your friendship made me wish to make my course of action as clear as I can in a letter.

### To the Same.

*Dec. 2nd*, 1878.—Humpty Dumpty cannot be put on his wall again. Things are very different now from what they were last Tuesday. I did my very best to prevent the tumble and smash, but in vain. Such questions as these must be divested of personal feeling as far as possible. I could not now attend the Conference and put the previous question without importing a personal element into the discussion, which, at all events, ought not to be settled in my presence. I have not withdrawn from the Conference. If the Conference is at all of my mind it is quite open to them to show it, and next year I would attend and bring forward a motion excluding structural questions.

If they are not of my mind, the sooner I am out of attendance the better, as I do not consider that these questions can be discussed in an honest way without an

immense suppression of underlying facts and motives. I would be in a false position were I to come to this Conference with all these unsettled difficulties, and a personal tangle to boot.

When the Conference met it declined, in a resolution which named him as its founder, to accept his resignation. Many of the leading headmasters wrote privately to endorse this public resolution, and the terms in which they did so indicate the hold which he had gained upon the Conference:—

"I really think that now we have a fair chance of keeping the Conference to useful work, if you will come back and strengthen the opponents of hasty change. Nothing could be more complimentary to yourself than the tone of the Conference, nothing more significant of the influence for good which you may exercise. I hope and trust you will say 'yes.'"

"The loyal feelings which we all entertain towards you as our founder, and the sincere and hearty respect which every one feels for you, over and above the personal friendship and regard which many of us cherish towards you, make it a matter of earnest desire that you will consider the question about which you differed from the committee as laid aside, and that we shall meet you next year on your 'native heath,' in the precincts of your old school, Eton College."

"I write a line to express a hope that you will reconsider your decision, and continue to serve on the committee of the Conference. I do not know that I as a single person have any right to do so, except this: I was one of the original thirteen who met in the schoolroom at Uppingham on the occasion of the first Conference; and as the whole Conference justly looks upon you as its father and founder, so I think those of the thirteen who still survive as members of it may in an especial manner look upon ourselves as your children. As an act of *pietas*, therefore, I write to express a very earnest hope that you will not give up your place on the committee. I quite understand the motives which led you to offer your resignation, and knowing the opinion which you

hold as to the action of the committee, I do not see how you could have acted otherwise than protest in the strongest way; but now that the protest has been made, I do sincerely hope that you will consent to resume your place on the committee. It is not only that we shall lose your help as a member of that body (though I am sure that the loss would be felt to be a very great one), but all of us would feel much of the zest taken out of our meetings if one to whom we look up as our founder were no longer to take a prominent place amongst us."

"If there were many reasons why one lamented your absence, the loss was somewhat compensated to your friends for the opportunity it gave for the public expression of this feeling; to them it was very pleasant to hear the frequent and honourable allusions to 'our founder' and the misfortune of his absence."

The principle for which he contended having been maintained his resignation was withdrawn. The following year he shared in the reception of the Conference at the ancient school of his boyhood. The event must have seemed like the crowning triumph of a project conceived in anxious fears ten years before. In a letter to his friend, T. H. Birley, Esq., he says:—

"

The Conference at Eton was a great success in putting the finishing stroke to its power and importance. I quite felt that henceforth, while there might be disruption, there was no risk of extinction. We were, of course, received very sumptuously—all our meals in the College Hall, and a grand soiree given by the Provost. . . . It was a very striking fact —some 140 head and assistant masters meeting at Eton—and marks a memorable epoch.[1]

[1] See Note, page 338.

# CHAPTER VIII

## EXTRACTS FROM DIARY

### 1870–1875

THE period covered by the two preceding chapters was crowded with other interests besides those there referred to, and these years were among the most laborious and trying of Thring's toil-filled life. The work of completing the school construction went steadily on. Problems of internal management were constantly arising to be dealt with. The process of reorganisation through which the school was passing, the doubt about its future, the decisive stand on great principles which Thring felt bound to take, the change from the old governing body to the new one, made it a time of unrest. In maintaining his principles and in carrying out his plans the relations between himself and his masters were sometimes severely strained. I shall have to speak of these relations in another place, but for the present it is enough to say that during these eventful years the idea of resigning his headmastership more than once entered Thring's mind. The completion of the external appliances of the school filled him with satisfaction, and he could face resolutely enough external attack, but internal opposition or lack of sympathy was a sore

vexation of spirit to a man of his ardent temperament. Success seems to have weakened the vigorous and enthusiastic co-operation of early days, and the fact took away no small part of his happiness in success.

What has been said will explain a note of disappointment which runs through much of his diary during this period. The shadow of coming disaster in sanitary matters is also seen. For the rest, many passages throw light upon his convictions on educational questions and his methods of school management.

*January 11th.*—Alas for the week that has passed. Little Leo Beale was taken ill of scarlet fever the day after we started, and after seeming to have it favourably, died on Sunday, and Mrs. Beale was taken ill on the Saturday also, but I am thankful to say she is doing well. Both were at the hospital. I returned yesterday summoned by a telegram from Bisham, and buried him to-day. Poor Beale feels it very much, as may well be supposed. All my plans are broken off, as I fear the chance of being thought even to bring infection. God be thanked, as yet we are all well, and we trust, as the poor little boy was moved immediately, that there is no infection. It all seems like a dream.

*January 17th.*—Finished my Conference work this morning; took also the statement about the schoolroom negotiations to be printed. I shall want it in these coming days. I have never felt so firm hearted, so untroubled, so quietly resolute as now. And I thank God for it. I thank Him for giving me a breathing time, and filling my heart with courage and patience before the whirl begins again. I shall want it all before I have done, between work and battle, but I feel He will be with me.

*January 18th.*—I believe to-day there was in the *Times* what I may call the first personal thorough recognition of my working life from an educational quarter. . . . It is the first time I have been quoted as an authority by an eminent outsider, and it is a striking fact. There is much work cut out to be done. Honour and wealth serve to snub fools and save much friction. So I hail a little honour as so much clear gain.

*January 29th.*—What a strange being is man! Here am I going to write, writing this very moment about that which I am quite ignorant of myself. Such a strange mixture of meanness and honesty, faith and unfaith, cowardice and bravery, hardness and weakness, vanity and humility, that one is all at the same moment. One thing I see that I am very ungrateful to God for His great blessings, and meanly sensitive to temporary trifles,—that I find it very hard to attend to the detail of working life, and yet keep my heart broad and open to the great impressions and results, very hard to feel the Christian truths which one believes to the bottom of one's heart.

*January 29th.*—This morning Mr. Eve's report on Oakham and Uppingham reached me. I am glad it is over. He has done his work well on the whole, but the fallacies inseparable to such an inspection are to my eyes there as a matter of course. How can it be otherwise? . . .

*February 6th.*—The feeling of no boys in my own house makes it quite like the holidays to me still, and I now know by experience for the first time the immeasurable difference between a boarding-house master and a teacher, and how absolutely necessary it is for a headmaster, at least, to have had boarding-house experience, or else all the depth and truth of the training power would be lost or non-existent. I find, too, the practical force of my theory that a day school is an entirely distinct institution from a boarding school, and a master in a day school is well paid at half the rate of a boarding-house master. . . . I shall be obliged now to put off my boys' return. Still very anxious about fever both in my own house and other houses.

*February 7th.*—We have been obliged to refuse boys this time. The school is full to the last degree.

*February 9th.*—In the morning, before I started from here, I received a note from Henry, stating he had heard that I had made a very unfavourable impression on the Commissioners by refusing to co-operate with the governors. I wrote a long letter giving the facts, and wound up with an indignant assertion that the Commissioners had to be judged as well as to judge, and that I should fight out to the uttermost any attempt to undo my work here. He has not answered. I hope he

will have the good sense not to. A very nice letter from Mrs. Charles Kingsley this afternoon (her husband is in S. America), which cheered me. . . .

The intense relief of having no boys back in one's house is beyond expression. Yet what a loss in depth and true work there would be in not having boys in the house. How could I value the training part rightly? How direct, sympathise with, and rightly honour masters without this experience? . . .

*February 20th.*—This morning, perhaps, I should have begun with my old grumbling, "A weary week," etc. To-night I feel as if I never should grumble again, such a spirit has come on me. It is as if my eyes were opened by God to see the self-spirit pass away, and to be able with a clear glance to read truth. I feel so happy in the many blessings of being able to do His work, so strong now that for a time the self-mist has rolled off my soul, so ready for war, as if a great war was coming which God by his revelation of Himself to me, and of myself to myself, has been preparing me to fight in quiet, humble, unselfish faith. Not that the old temptations will not come back, but the memory of the clearer vision in my spirit to-night will come too, and the power to endure patiently the wounds to vanity and self-assertion, to resist idleness, and to rejoice in the blessings of my home and Christ's service. May God keep me and mine for ever. Amen.

*February 25th.*—Alas, to-night Walter Earle came in to say one of his little ones has the fever. Poor fellow, it is a great trial, and we are getting anxious for the school. It will be strange if, after so many years, just before we have a hospital, we are overwhelmed. I trust we have not been "worshipping our nets," and as we got our machinery better, thought less of God. One thing I hope I have learnt in these hard weeks, to be grateful for the many ordinary blessings I have. I knew I had them before, but now God has made me feel them.

*March 2nd.*—A letter from Harper this morning, enclosing a sort of model scheme from the Commissioners, which he had got leave to send me. It is most disheartening. The whole pivot of it is the absurd and pernicious governor idea; not a glimpse of knowledge of school in it. I am quite in despair, not that I believe in *laws* doing beyond a certain amount to

kill or raise; but yet it is fearful to have such a lying start on what ought to be fresh life. I am rather in hopes the magazine article has dropped through, either from my paper being thought bad, or Macmillan repudiating the thing. I shall be much relieved if it has. I cannot cook up half-truths for the present taste. Bradley's paper was very good, excepting from the one fatal defect (to me its chief merit), that he did not realise the least the deadly character of his own admissions against hostels, and proceeds at the end to suggest improvements. As if the only true thing was not fairly to admit their great evils, and then if it cannot be helped, to have them with eyes opened as being the best that can be got, instead of whitewashing the sepulchre. I am quite baffled how to act about the Commissioners. I dread the whole affair unspeakably. My convictions are so intensely against all their principles (as far as they have any), and I fear I shall only appear to them a cantankerous, self-asserting bigot. May God help me. So alone do I seem to stand in the perception of the first principles of schools and their value. I want a talk very much with Robert Gladstone. This Parliament work cuts the life and interest out of all one's work, and leaves little but drudgery and slavery more or less gilded. Thank God I have done my main work before this frost has come on it. Yet I could wish I were younger, to contemplate beginning again more calmly than I can.

*March 4th.*—This evening Walter Earle and I settled the inscription for the east window: "First-fruits from Old Boys, A.D. 1870." *Laus Deo.* There was a wish to put my name up, but I stopped it for two reasons: first, it does not represent the true kernel of things, the work for God given by God; and, secondly, it reminds one of the inscriptions churchwardens stick up. We had a hearty laugh over it.

*March 10th.*—Back again home. Thank God, much better in health, having done right good work, I trust, and with a load off my mind on the subject of the Commissioners more than I could have believed.

On Tuesday Harper, Pears, and myself went to the Charing Cross Hotel and held a long sitting over the scheme, and were unanimous in proposing certain changes, not many or great in appearance, but which will get things really right if we carry

them, as I cannot but think we shall. I have quite been set at ease, too, about our governors; the whole Government theory and aim is against them, so I feel quite secure. . . .

It is very wonderful the way Harper, with his near connection with R—— and his bluff, manly, good-natured vigour, has been raised up to do this work, and a path has been opened out through him for me to get this work here forward too, and for England generally, when two years ago I could not have raised a finger. It is another of the true miracles of which I have seen so many here. Θεῷ δόξα.

*April 4th.*—I was delighted this morning by Walter Earle bringing in a painted map of sentence analysis. In the first place it is an excellent idea; in the second, it shows they are thoroughly turning their minds to teaching, and I am at length successful in this, thanks to the Analysis. I am greatly pleased.

*April 28th.*—We are really so full even for Midsummer that it is useless putting names down any more. Θεῷ δόξα. How different from the old racking expectancy and too often hope deferred of a few boys coming.

*May 15th.*—An Indian newspaper mentioning *Education and School* in high terms. This may do good, as out there they are not choked up with powerful shams as we. As soon as things are looked at on their own merits and on principles my system must conquer.

*May 17th.*—Freeman got a scholarship at Pembroke, Oxford. I am glad of that. . . . A master of Marlborough applied last week for information about houses, which I gave him. . . .

All through his school life Thring had a rooted aversion to newspaper discussion of school difficulties. This was not because he feared publicity, but because he thought discussion of this kind often defeated the ends of moral training. Having used his best judgment in administering the school discipline, he preferred to be perfectly silent under criticism. The following paragraph refers to an outbreak of evil in the school, which he had thought right to crush with a stern hand.

*June 7th.*—An unpleasant note this morning from the editor of the *Stamford Mercury*, saying there were painful rumours about concerning expulsions and punishments here, and he thought a cautious paragraph from me might do good and save worse. I thanked him, but said I was unable to see my way to writing anything; that I was only too well aware of the power of evil reports, but if it was to be, I could only just bear it quietly now as I had done in worse times. But it is very hard that nothing can be done without a lying or malicious curiosity publishing everything. It makes honest work very hard. Even now the prospect is by no means pleasant of a garbled account getting into the papers.

*June 12th.*—. . . To-day was a glorious day, 189 communicants; 147 boys actually present. A most impressive and comforting fact. Skrine has got the Newdigate and Hamley a College scholarship. This is pleasant. . . .

*August 15th.*—Sir George Couper brought his second son on Saturday, and I had much talk with him yesterday, which left me immensely strengthened in spirit. When I see the deep conviction such a man as he is has of this work, and the gratitude he feels for having his sons here, my heart also realises more my purpose and its reality, the sense of which gets deadened and almost lost in the mud of Commissions and general jaw, so that one's faith half gives way. I feel now again what a noble work this is, and that my post is here, and I am content it should be here. May God bless us and strengthen us.

*August 21st.*—To-day a Mr. G——, who used to have a private school near Liverpool, has been here on a visit of inspection. This is good. As soon as curiosity is roused, and intelligent men begin to look in at us and examine the school questions, progress will begin, and the prevailing ignorance stand a chance of getting dispersed somewhat.

*August 27th.*—It is a strange epoch. The dead French nation is now being shattered, and standing armies are doomed. For they cannot stand against armed nations as the German system is. And with the doom of standing armies wars of mere aggression must come to an end, as it is not possible for all national life to enter into war, and have everything brought to a standstill unless there is a really national cause. The

modern epoch which railways have made possible is by this war thoroughly begun, and a new world, though as yet people little suspect it.

*August 28th.*—The boys home and a happy day. A collection for the sick and wounded; special offertory, £28, 12s. Had the house in the garden as usual. . . .

I feel so much nerved for work, and content to work on here in spite of all my troubles when I see the life a school like this has in these evil days.

*August 31st.*—A great encouragement this morning; a letter from America from B——, who left a year or two ago,—such a manly letter, telling us of his having schools for his negroes, and how well they work, and that the Americans don't like the negro schools, but please God they will do good. Altogether so refreshing to find such a fellow a pioneer of good in a strange land. It has cheered me greatly.

*September 1st.*—I dread more and more the false stamp the Government is going to put on our schools. Before all was open, gross ignorance indeed of all kinds, but no pretence of unity. Now the Government is going to give the impression of all the schools having been put on a good basis, without ensuring that any one of them shall be able to do true work at all. This is terrible, and I see no way of escape, no power of warning, no possibility of even getting such a statement heard, much less believed.

*September 18th.*—Have taken up six new boys into my division; all good, for the first time in seventeen years. No heavy weights amongst them. This is a great comfort. My Rugby candidate for the mastership came over to-day, Haslam. I am delighted with him, and shall certainly write to-morrow to give him the appointment. I do not know when I have seen a man who has made a more favourable impression on me — modest, refined, genuine, and working apparently. Thank God for bringing this to a happy ending.

*September 21st.*—I feel so relieved at having found a master. It is so difficult and anxious a thing.

*September 27th.*—I can't get out of my mind poor Captain Cowper Coles going down in his vessel the *Captain*. What a life has his been for fifteen years! The upward struggle of the inventor and the genius against the oppression of stupid power

and neglect, and all the trials a poor man in England must endure from Government incapacity, and then to die, and leave his ten young children, and then all England acknowledges his greatness and laments his loss, and then in about a year or two our rich and generous land gives the widow a pension, and a notice appears in the *Times*, etc., "To the widow of Capt. Cowper Coles, for the distinguished services of her late husband, £100." Happy land, when the greatest inventor of his day after fifteen years of anguish just gets a trial; happy land, where merit is rewarded at so costly a rate when once it is thoroughly recognised.

*October 3rd.*—I never realised before to-day how completely the righteous work of having the classes not too large limits the numbers of a school. It has been brought home to me by the talk of fresh houses. We cannot have fresh houses without getting parallel classes, which are a great evil. I have determined, therefore, only to sanction the building of one house, and so not to increase the school ultimately at all, or much now, as I intend to drop the Bank house, and reduce Walter Earle's present one to a twenty. I am much easier in my mind since I came to this decision.

*October 8th.*—Walter Earle showed me this morning a very nice new painted analysis scheme, by which he brings out the sentence clauses into prominence one by one. I am much pleased by this teaching progress.

*October 10th.*—Played fives to-day; Dory Bell and I against the school. Lost, but not ignobly; the first time we only got eight or ten, the second fourteen, the last we won. But I paid for it by a sick headache, and I fear it is the last game I shall ever play in consequence. It is hard to give up the last reminiscence of youth, but perhaps in one's forty-ninth year, and near the end of it, one may be well content to have a reminiscence of this kind.

*October 11th.*—I must get the hospital rules printed and send them to each master. That will keep them in some order. I gave out strongly this morning that under three weeks in measles, and six in scarlet fever, however light a case might be, a boy should not come out of quarantine, and also that no boy should be sent home. Parents might come and take boys home, and in some cases have them sent home, but

the initiative should not come from a master. This was to check men getting rid of boys to escape trouble. It is very trying governing in a school. There is always a leak somewhere. You cannot deal with human beings like bales of goods, neither can you be everywhere yourself to see that things go right.

*October 12th.*—To-day two parents came to inspect; a Mr. P——, an Irish barrister of eminence, and a Mr. C——, a clergyman. Spent a good deal of time with them. Mr. P—— a particularly pleasant fellow. After various talk, he told me he had an intimate friend, a lady, at Cambridge, and that she, at his desire, had inquired of the authorities at all the Colleges in Cambridge of the character of Uppingham men, and that there had been but one answer everywhere, that it was exceptionally good morally. This is very cheering, though we have heard it before. This is something worth working for. Θεῷ δόξα.

*October 16th.*—Very pleased on Friday to find that my house had got up a little entertainment of their own on Friday evening,—four of them, including my captain, Cameron, having practised some good songs to sing. We went in all of us as audience. . . . When I think of what a schoolboy's idea of a holiday evening amusement, and singing in particular, would have been in my day I could not feel too thankful for what I saw. . . .

*October 17th.*— —— here yesterday, bringing his brother; came straight from Harrow, back there at work again to-day. I was much pleased at his understanding feeling for Uppingham, and quite surprised at the frank way in which he stated how far behind us Harrow was in the means of doing thorough work. It is something to find the question of proper machinery coming on. . . .

Sir C. Adderley has let Walter Earle have the ground, and he has undertaken to build a house worth £4000 on it. . . . The four houses up there will be very good and striking, and I shall get rid of the "Bank" entirely, and of my brother's house as a thirty house, and show the world I do not mean to increase the numbers. A great many birds to kill with one stone. . . .

*October 25th.*—Some of the masters this morning made

a dead set at me on the subject of raising the terms. I met them resolutely and quietly. I contested their figures, and challenged any one to show by actual figures in detail that they got less than £1000 a year, boy expenses paid, with a full house. Then I took the argument about building houses which was advanced, and said I was not concerned with that. Since quite the beginning every man had built because he wished to. I had nothing to do but sanction it, and had not encouraged any man, and the early men I had rewarded by large concessions (this was put in by some of the later men), so that their risk was minimised. I said whilst I would give anything I could for good work, and only wished I could do more, if they were going to debate the trade question I should argue it like a thorough old Jew, and I repudiated utterly that success, as such, gave them the slightest claim for higher pay. In that sense it was no trade; they came on a certain basis which success did not affect. I said that their only actual argument was the actual rise in provision and wages which I was not inclined to put so high as they did. Some one said £100 a year, but some statistics on the spot brought it down at once to £70. All this talk occupied a long time, was friendly, and so far good. I intimated that I would not raise now in this intermediate state; that I thought it would be very impolitic to do it; but that I should use every endeavour before the Commissioners to get us higher terms, as on principle I thought the first endowed school ought to be at a good level. Altogether I got out some very home truths in a good way. I am the headmaster now in a way I have never been before. The Commissioners have done this much. . . .

*October 29th.*—The news of the fall of Metz yesterday. If it is possible the power of lying will be taken from the French by this, and the end draw near. Not, however, till Paris falls. But one thing is certain: the great French bubble which for two hundred years has been a fear and a glitter in Europe has burst; that strange compound of cleverness, vanity, lies, lust, blood, and robbery is come to an end. What will be the next great European temptation and tempter; is it England, with its greed of gain and money self-worship? A new page is turned—what is that page going to be?

*November 6th.*—Nothing is harder for a ruler than the having to deal with a vexatious incapable who yet is not incapable enough to make it just to get rid of him.

*November 14th.*—I have just had in a boy who was defiant in Anstey's class, and quite subdued him and sent him off in a right mind. That is a blessing. So also was an interview I had with a Mrs. M—— on Saturday. The poor woman is going out in a fortnight to join her husband in India, and leaves two boys here. I have promised solemnly to protect and help them should they need it. Two more of my Indian orphans, as I may say. It was touching to see her confidence and gratitude. I thanked God from my heart that He had given to me to be a shield to the defenceless, and that the school was true as far as we could make it, and that by God's blessing her sons would be safe here. Θεῷ δόξα.

*December 4th.*—Another case of fever in my house to-night. I am so down about it, and, what is worse, feel so rebellious in my heart against it, so unsubmissive, that I am shocked at it. It is such a disappointment just when we hoped all was going to be free. Such a blow and additional work and worry, both of body and mind, that I cannot bear it calmly, and yet how little it is; what a nothing; how thankful I should be for this if it was really a heavy sorrow. I am ashamed at myself and vexed, and yet so impatient. School life seems so hard with these immeasurable responsibilities. Such a perpetual struggle and so little rest. Yet I have many blessings, very many, very, very many. O God have mercy on us, and make us love Thy will.

*December 9th.*—A letter from Edwin Palmer of Balliol to-day about the introduction of the Latin pronunciation. I informed him of the headmasters' meeting, and its being a subject we were going to deal with, and I thought it was certain to be carried. . . .

*December 13th.*—Another manly, cheering letter from our South Carolina planter B——, telling me what he is doing amongst the negroes, teaching them, etc. This does cheer one. . . .

It is certain we shall have waterworks in the town, I am thankful to say. Mr. Forster has got the thing in shape. The school has undertaken some £1400 worth of shares.

I am to be chairman, and the committee will consist of town and school. I am rejoiced at this. There are to be ten free cocks for the poor. This is a great step. It will furnish, too, at last a friendly common meeting ground on business matters, whereas hitherto we have been always dealing with hostile rectors and unfriendly Boards.

*December 16th.*—Last night I wound up the school, and spoke strongly on the sordid point of looking on prizes as motives to work instead of records of having worked.

*February 26th.*—Mr. Bell came on Wednesday, and spent Thursday, giving us a nice lecture on the Boy's Home. We collected £19 : 13s. for him this offertory. . . .

Next day our committee meeting. Eton and Harrow both there. The business very satisfactory, and felt to be so by all. We are to confer with Mr. Forster, the two Latin professors, and delegates from both Universities, who will without doubt be sent to us. So the pot is boiling very briskly. Butler was very cordial. I have arranged to spend a Sunday at Harrow and preach in about three weeks. He has promised to come here. All this intercourse does good. Jex-Blake expressed a great desire to come here. I asked him vigorously, but he fears he will not be able to manage it this half-year. I returned last night very pleased with the whole result.

*February 27th.*—Apportioned the gardens to-day; about forty-two given away as yet. They are beginning to look very nice as the paths are getting fairly forward. It gave me great pleasure. . . . Everybody seemed to be delighted. It really will be very pretty when finished. I myself rejoice exceedingly at having got it set going at last.

[The gardens here referred to consisted of a few acres of land—"Fairfield"—which Thring himself bought and planted. A portion of the ground was divided into garden-plots, and these were allotted at a small rental to boys who cared for the cultivation of flowers. An aviary, in which a considerable collection of the smaller native birds was gradually got together, was added later, and furnished additional opportunity for creating a taste for natural history. Gardens and aviary were alike parts of his general plan of having around the school a variety of appliance for giving boys of varying taste happy and interesting occupation.]

*March 7th.*—Had to send a most disagreeable accusation of neglect to —— in class work last night. He has been in, and, I am thankful to say, has completely cleared himself. Indeed, I feel more confidence in his teaching than I ever have done, as he explained his whole processes, and showed intelligence, thought, and zeal. It is an immense relief to me. A dull fear of bad work going on is dreadfully trying.

*March 13th.*—The jaw about liberty of speech going on. Some good will come out of it. A clearing in some degree. One would think, to hear the masters talk, that they were a set of slaves, bound and gagged, whereas from my point of view they are hunting me open-mouthed, and my object is—escape.

*March 20th.*—Back from Harrow this afternoon after a most interesting visit. Dr. and Mrs. Butler exceptionally hospitable and anxious to welcome me. Mrs. Butler charming; just the genuine, fresh, womanly simplicity that is both beauty and work in one. Met old Munroe there, a most unexpected pleasure. He charged me like a bull on the Latin pronunciation question to my great amusement. Several of the masters invited to meet me. The singing in Harrow chapel was very hearty. Preached to the boys at evening service. More masters in the evening. On Monday one of the Whittings, whom I examined at Eton, came in as examiner there, and I had a very nice short walk with him, and heard a great deal about King's and Eton. When in bed this morning Campbell's letter announcing Maude's success at Corpus came in, which was very seasonable. They had the news in the *Times* shortly afterwards and congratulated me. They had a good man in who did not win. This came very much in the nick of time. The Butlers are coming here on the 23rd. This is good. Good for us, good also for them. Altogether the two days have been cram full of incident for me, of which these few lines give a very meagre sketch.

*March 22nd.*—A most comically triumphant day. The P——s were brought over here to lunch by Mr. ——, my governor, a good man, a gentleman, and intelligent, but who has never seen the school, though he has been some six years or more a governor, and has been here at their meetings every year. Well, A—— and I showed them all over, and I have scarcely left off laughing since they left

at Mr. S——'s gradual illumination as we went on. It is impossible to narrate except at great length and as a literary amusement, which I have no time for. But the manner in which he began discussing educational questions *ex cathedra* at luncheon, and subsided by degrees as he heard and saw more and more, was enough to make a cat laugh. But what a satire on human life and English enlightenment, that a real gentleman as he is, and no fool, should, after so many years in office too over me, come here in supreme ignorance of everything!

*April 1st.*— F—— going to give up. My £100 gone, I fear. However, so many hundreds of mine have gone through master criticisms that this last one is no new feeling. I am very vexed, though, to lose him. A good confectioner is a great thing at a school.

*April 28th.*—Went to see Walter Earle's house. He really is carrying out our principles in a very true way. The boys' part is the best both internally and architecturally—in the elevation. This is very good, and shows heart work and feeling for the cause. I care for this. It is worth much. . . .

*May 13th.*—An important meeting this morning. A very important one in sundry particulars. The English question was discussed with a temper and quiet good sense quite new. The unpleasant explanations this half-year seem to have borne good fruit in that way. I quite felt a new feeling of having a body of men able to be dealt with, and willing to work together as an organised body. I trust it may be so. The result was important too. We decided to drop Greek entirely in the three lowest classes, with a view of getting better work done later, and to substitute for it English in three aspects. First, English Grammar and Language Analysis, in which English is to be worked as we have hitherto worked the classics; secondly, English knowledge of a common sort, *e.g.* air, physical geography, natural history, etc.; thirdly, a more complete preparation of the Latin lessons from an English point of view, etc., better translations, explanations of Latin by English. This is a great gain. I have waited many years for this, and now it begins to open.

*May 25th.*—It is most painful to me this want of earnestness. I sometimes fear that though the old plan of severity

made sad work of it sometimes, that the danger of making boy life too pleasant, even if done lovingly, is great also.

*May 31st.*—I was gratified exceedingly to-day by hearing that Rowe, on being told by some of the masters that his statement looked as if I had written it, answered he was glad of it. He wished to follow me in all school things, and carry out my views. He had nó children, and wished to do something for England in extending the sphere of true school work, and trying to make a school after my model. This is very cheering in all ways. It cheers me for the future. I did not think he was so decided, and he is a good man, honest and high minded, and means what he says.

*September 9th.*—Nothing is more fatal in a school than obtrusive religion.

*September 10th.*—Eighteen years ago on this day I stepped in here as headmaster first, and headmaster of what? O God, I thank Thee this day for all the blessing Thou hast given this work, for the mighty powers of life Thou hast breathed into this place. To-night I was in the schoolroom at the rehearsal of Samson. My heart felt deep and strong as I listened and took in the wonderful power there was in that work only. A full quarter of the school was there rendering that glorious music with disciplined, willing zeal as David led them. Θεῷ δόξα. What was I when I came here? What am I now? Eighteen years, the bulk of my working life, however long I live. Thank God for the work.

*October 4th.*—I was sorry to write to Mullins expressing my aversion to a Divinity prize. But, apart from that, I think a school can easily have too many prizes and scholarships, and am not at all anxious to set them going here. One must have some, just as a bait, but they don't reach the class I most care for, or only by accident,—the good needy boys,—though I admit they are the only public way of giving help. I think if the headmaster could take a few boys at lower terms it would be good. . . . I don't like many scholarships.

*October 5th.*—Well, at all events, I have founded this great school in its present state, and staked my whole life on it, "built my heart into the courses of the walls," for the cause of Christ's apostolic Church and His truth as represented best at this day by the Church of England. I believe in apostolic

succession in spite of modern sneers, and sacramental grace in spite of scientific chemistry, and a new life in baptism in spite of Materialism. If the swine come into this school and this chapel of ours, so be it. God knows best whether His Spirit shall dwell here or fly elsewhere. The world is wide. I pray when God's truth is not living in this place that the place may come to nought, and the walls be overthrown, unless God keep it as a witness of what once has been.

*October 17th.*—Been attacked again to let masters take more boys. . . . Year by year one has had to take a stand in adversity and prosperity against suggestions that are treason deep and deadly to the truth by which we live, and which would in early days have killed the life before it grew, and sooner or later would kill it now.

*October 18th.*—Mr. N——, the American, here to-day; has been talking over a plan of founding a school in America. He says some of his friends have had the matter at heart, but were at sea as to what or how, that now he is prepared to lay down the law about it, and to state that Uppingham satisfied the requirements. I have promised to give all the help in my power. I wonder if it will come to anything? It looks like an opening. It is at all events cheering, as showing how God may be going to spread true school-life, and I accept it with gratitude and praise.

*November 18th.*—Bought the Chequers' Inn and premises; at least have agreed to give the terms finally proposed, viz. £1200, the present owner to have it enfranchised, and pay £50 towards that. I have not 1200 pence, but it is of infinite importance getting hold of this now at a reasonable price, which it is, when the Midland Railway Station is going to make that road the thoroughfare of Uppingham, and a large inn or a fatal price would undoubtedly be the alternative.

*November 27th.*—The eventful day over. One hundred boys exactly confirmed to-day; a very impressive sight and service. The bishop come and gone—all satisfactory. Nothing untoward happened. I trust all now will go well. I don't know when I have felt a greater relief, and also a more exultant, thankful sense of present blessing than when I got back to my study after seeing and hearing that noble sight and service. Glory be to God.

*December 3rd.*—To-day we have had a Communion like King Josiah's. One hundred and eighty-four boys actually present; only about eight voluntarily absent. This was glorious and heart-cheering.

God has sent me many little springs of comfort too. I was greatly vexed at the mean spirit and blindness of some of the masters, the impossibility of even feeling one in heart with them thoroughly, when on Friday morning my house invited us to a concert for that night (præpostor holiday), got up by our two houses, Haslam's and mine. So we went, and I had a most happy night. It was so dreamlike, when I recollected my own school life, to sit and listen to twenty of our sixty boys singing beautiful music of the best kind, with the rest applauding, and not thinking the pleasure complete unless we came and shared it,—so dreamlike that I could have cried for joy at this proof of a new world and higher life.

*January 26th*, 1872.—This week I have been at Lichfield a day with my cousin Bishop Hobhouse, and dined at the palace, and renewed my acquaintance with Bishop Selwyn. Both Abraham and Hobhouse were there. It was very interesting, but I was a little disappointed with the bishop's grasp of his subjects; it struck me as wanting breadth and power, but I honour him and like him much. I attended early Communion in the palace chapel on the Conversion of St. Paul, all of us having the martyred Patteson in our minds.

*March 4th.*—My return of health has made my spirit so much more capable of active effort, and less crushed by vexations. This week we are going to have printed a detailed account of the money invested here since 1854, and the annual expenditure,—an interesting document. The expenditure, I believe, reaches £81,000 odds, against £3000 by the Trust. A copy is going to every governor as a pleasant preparation for next week's work with the Commissioners.

*March 13th.*—A most momentous day to my feelings. Yesterday I was in fearful dread that I had got on a nest of indecency. Some of this fear was dispelled last night, but enough remained to make me very anxious. Then this morning I received a most cheering letter from Mr. Gladstone (written on the receipt of our statement of expenditure), and also the £1500 he has lent me. Then came the Com-

missioner. After his session with the governors he spent the afternoon with me, and I showed him about. Our talk was very satisfactory to me. All is well, I trust. The governors have shown no teeth, and I hope soon we shall be started in our new course. A great load is off my mind in this. Then to-night I have investigated the indecency case, and find it very reassuring on the whole,—slight, far back, and not repeated. I am more thankful than I can tell, and quite happy to be spared the anguish of punishment. Thank God for this. To-day in the paper M—— A——'s death. I feel it much. He was one of my most influential captains, much good, much evil mixed, but the good prevailed, and I trust has prevailed. But it searches my heart. He filled such an important epoch in my school life. Pray God we meet in heaven, a happy meeting of old school memories and human life.

My class gone, my work for the day done. A tight day over, but a day with much, very much to be thankful for in all ways. Thank God.

*March 19th.*—It vexes me day by day to see the bottom of the school, which I lay so much stress on in my own heart, in such incompetent hands compared with what it might be, and yet I cannot bring myself to think that men who do honest work up to a certain mark ought to be got rid of when once established here because they failed to do better. But it is one of the trials of my life, and a daily one.

*April 9th.*—Dr. N——, the headmaster at Oscott, who was at my first school with me, came. I spent a pleasant four hours with him, and showed him all I had to show. He is a good man and thoughtful. I am glad to find an opening with the Romanists, and prize exceedingly any opportunity of showing Christian love and friendship which I am sure is the only true life. Hate is of the devil.

*May 1st.*—Commemoration Day, a lovely summer day. My sermon over; it has been on my mind very much. The day was to me solemn and sweet and sad, for I feel more and more both the burden of this great work and the want of money, and also the intense difficulty of getting any living life to work. . . . Yesterday was a bitter day. White came into me to offer to sell his property next our Quad for £700—a

very reasonable sum—and I agreed, intending if I could get it in no other way to borrow and mortgage. When I told Marie this she fairly broke down, and all the suppressed trial of our long debt came out, and I broke down too. We were getting near level when my gardens and book payments pulled us back again. It is so hard, when expenses are necessarily great, to get clear the moment interest begins to suck one's blood. However, I must now make a great effort. Grasmere must be given up after this year; we cannot give it up now; and I must never more, till I have something in hand, do any avoidable thing that entails outlay. I must try to get this money from the Domus Fund, but if there is going to be any jaw I must give up the whole thing, important as it is in many respects. I cannot endure a discussion with the masters on this subject. I must try to be patient and more trustful. Debt is a fearful thing.

*May 2nd.*—A terrible blow has fallen on us to-day. Last night, perhaps even as I was writing the above, my dear friend Robert Gladstone suddenly went to his rest. I feel so lonely; in a sense he was my only friend. In all the long battle here no man of power and wealth has been on my side, so that I could trust and feel support in him, till I knew Mr. Gladstone. His very existence on earth, though far away, was a feeling of support and friendship and power to which I believe I very largely owe the recovery of my health in these last years. The thought of his wisdom and friendship and strength has been such a rest to me. It has pleased God to take him, and I am as one turned out into the storm again. God help us all. I should be far more crushed if I had not felt God again and again taking earthly stays from us in our work here, and yet blessing it more and more. But the loss of his cheery, pleasant friendship is to me in itself irremediable, another of the great heavenly links pulling one up from earth. Yesterday was indeed a commemoration day, a day much to be remembered in my heart. God help us all.

*May 5th.*—Heard this morning some account of my dear friend's peaceful end. I feel more and more what he was to me. The funeral is on Tuesday. Still my heart is quieter, and his memory beginning to be an upward feeling already. I thank God for having given him me these years. I verily

believe both health of body and calmness of mind have been partly restored to me through the having felt his sympathy and power, and the rest it brought. . . .

Another glimpse to-day of God's great purposes. This afternoon R—— came in with an offer to him to go to the Deccan as tutor to the Nizam's sons and the young Mussulman nobles of the court. This is the first time in history such a thing has occurred, one of those great openings of that strange new world which this generation is seeing the birth of. I shall miss him terribly if he goes, yet if the post is what it seems, and his father willing, what can I do but tell him to go. For it may be a great world-hinge having such a Christian gentleman as he is the first in such a post. Truly this school work is wonderful. I may say with St. Paul, that God tells me "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." But I want St. Paul's gladness and faith and courage sadly, and get very downhearted and dull and spiritless. Yet this has cheered me.

*May 21st.*—Back from Wellington College last night after a very interesting visit. Luckily had a fine day, and enjoyed immensely a walk with Kempthorne and Benson in that glorious country glowing with spring brightness. I had some very satisfactory talks with Benson especially about the Conference and its prospects and work. The school, though in buildings a portentous mistake, has the wonderful advantage of some 300 or 400 acres of its own, and all the walks and freedom from annoyance that this gives. Benson himself is a good man; much good work is clearly done there.

*May 28th.*—To-day the Haileybury match. The poor Haileybury team had us in first, and we got over 370 runs, and they have six wickets down for 26 runs or so. I am sorry for it. They are a very nice set of fellows, and it will so spoil their outing. Moreover, I don't want the cricket to get too powerful in the school here, and to be worshipped and made the end of life for a considerable section of the school.

*May 29th.*—This afternoon (I cannot help connecting the fact with the cricket) H—— came to ask leave to hold a meeting of the præpostors at 7 P.M., and about eight came to my study to ask counsel, as six of the eleven, the leading six, met in one of their studies (a præpostor's) about a week ago, and

sent out for wine and made claret cup. This is one of the most utter acts of treason and mock manly meanness I have ever had to deal with considering the circumstances. The deliberate, quiet, lying betrayal of trust by leaders in the school. I greatly fear it belongs to the professional and cricket as a science, and the setting up a rival power in the school by having so much made of a thing not taught by a master. It is very grievous in any case, and I really don't know what to do. I should dismiss W—— at once, if the thing had come before me as found out by me and not through the præpostors. It is good finding the præpostors acting against the school heroes in this way.

*May 31st.*—I was rejoiced at H——'s saying they had the opinions of all worth having in the school on their side in bringing this before me. This is indeed something to thank God for.

*June 1st.*—It really is glorious the good faith, on the whole, that is now rooted in the school. C—— and H——, the two principal characters of this late treason, have been to me to-night, and I have been thoroughly convinced of the general feeling and their own. When one considers that this sort of party is *the thing* in most schools, to have the præpostors denounce it, and the chief actors thoroughly acknowledge that it was good it should be so, come to me to express their sorrow and make friends if possible, and uphold this in the school, is a most happy victory of truth and right, and I feel very thankful.

*June 4th.*—Back from Lichfield. I am so glad I went. Hubert Hobson met us at the station, and then I went to the palace with the eleven, and was received most heartily by the bishop's eldest son, who billeted us. I and Gale went to Bishop Hobhouse. We had some time before dinner, and all of us went to the cathedral at once and saw that fairly, then to dinner. Mrs. Selwyn was particularly friendly and pleasant, and after dinner we saw the alms dish sent over by the American Church as their first gift to the English Mother Church, which Bishop Selwyn is to present this summer in their name. I was intensely interested by this wonderful bit of living history, stretching so far into the future, so sure to belong to all time, and to see it in Bishop Selwyn's palace as

his guest was a great fact. It is a thing for the boys to remember for ever.

*August 9th.*—Home yesterday after a delightful holiday. What has not happened! First of all God has broken the chains off me, and I am at last free from debt. Dear Cousin Maria Waldron has left me between £3000 and £4000, which lifts me well out of the prison. Glory be to God for His goodness. I know not how to be thankful enough. I can scarcely believe it yet. Our break-up day was fine, and all went off well, and on Saturday we got to Grasmere. The time has passed like magic, like a dream. We took the Gladstone children about a good deal, and spent a happy time altogether, though his departure was often in our hearts, sad for us; but why mourn for him? I am unusually well in health, and I trust shall be able to do my work this half-year. We had many guests during the holidays, old boys and others.

*August 11th.*—The first Sunday over with its sermon. Always a great relief, for I feel very doubtful and diffident about the fitness of many of my sermons. . . . I feel it a grand thing to have such a true work to do as this. Even the holidays, when over, and I am once more at the work, do not seem too attractive. Yet I wish I was not so hunted, so pressed for time always. I think from what I hear that our system and constructive excellence are beginning to make some impression abroad. At all events encouraging stories reach us, which make my work here easier by making the assistant masters feel proud of their places. But what matters? I feel sure of the living truth of the effort. I feel sure of the blessing of God on us in touching many hearts. May God make me satisfied with this if nothing ever comes to the surface.

*August 13th.*—A particularly nice set of new boys in my house in exchange for a particularly unsatisfactory set who left. It is a great temptation when prosperous to get rid of bad boys. But I have never yielded to it. But this sweetens the change when it comes honestly as now.

*August 15th.*—Great efforts being made to get me to pardon the six of the eleven who played the traitor last half, and admit them to the old boys' supper, but I will not. A great

principle is at stake, and the better the culprits the more their punishment will prove that no individual merit shall in such a case of treason avail. I will shoot my mutineers all the more mercilessly because the temptation was so slight, and their general character on the whole so good. W—— has been at me. He cannot see that this is no single arbitrary act, but a link in a chain of nineteen years' forging, every link of which has been forged on the same principle of kindly trust, and when the hour came, firm and unflinching judgment. He said I ought to take advice, that a jury of men eminent for goodness would pardon them, etc. I said I was acting on principle; that I had had during all my early life here to act in defiance of the advice of men considered wise. That Uppingham was Uppingham because I had dared take my stand on new principles, and work them steadily out in opposition to the opinions of others. He said "that means that you are infallible." "Not so," I answered, "but that I understand a ruler's responsibility and accept it." They none of them have any idea of the patient, ceaseless adherence to principle both in pardoning and in punishing that has made this school what it is, or indeed of any of the processes by which the higher tone of thought and morality has been produced, and in consequence they do often drag it down very much in their ignorance.

It is very painful to me punishing these fellows, and it spoils the match and supper for me besides exposing me to all sorts of arguments; but I do not see any way by which the school can be reached but by executing them, and at this great crisis, when I am going to give way to the demand for a resident professional, I must show that both the school honour and the school government are above cricket. I must give way on the professional. It is better to make and control a movement than to be dragged by it. And not to have one has become equivalent to losing rank as a school, which would damage my work with the boys immensely. So I mean to give way, and take it in to our regular routine.

*August 22nd.*—I do not know that I ever in my life heard anything more inspiriting and touching than C. E. Green's statements in talking with me before this, "that the stupidest boy who went out of Uppingham knew and felt he had a

mission in life," and much more to the same purpose. It is a glorious work of the Spirit of the living God when this living feeling of true life catches fast hold of men like him,—a feeling, a life, not a knowledge, power, or a school of thought, but a spirit of holy effort. Thank God for it.

*August 26th.*—I have paid £10 to-day to P—— at Stoke Dry, on an arbitration for damage done by flood—reserving, however, all legal rights for the future. This is the first real claim made in nineteen years. No one has ever been able to frame a complaint against the boys into the definite shape of a demand for damages. P—— behaved very civilly in the matter.

*September 4th.*—I am almost amused at the way in which masters talk . . . quite forgetting, as they speak, that there was no school at all in its present sense till I pulled it out of the depths of the sea. I quite feel as a pearl diver might do who sees in after years the town jewellers with his big pearl in their shop, which he brought out of dark depths of the dangerous sea from the midst of the sharks and the waters at the risk of life, whilst they have sat in the shop and put a little setting and fixing work round it.

*September 9th.*—How utterly different from my early dreams of combined work this has been, this lonely toil at the stake with the perpetual baiting, and the very imperfect realisation of the work I hoped for either in spirit or in deed! But God will bless it some time or other, all that is of Him. That comforts me. I never feel Him more than in these times of trial. How I should like to be released from this joyless government if it was His will. But I don't dare ask it. I see so many signs that it is His will that it should be borne.

*October 5th.*—The fever cases going on well. Very slight, yet this treacherous illness may at any time kill, and is just as infectious slight as severe. A boy just come in saying he is sick, frightens me; well, I trust not another case. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth," says the Psalmist, and so do headmasters, so incessant is the storm of missiles of one kind and another.

*October 16th.*—I cannot feel free yet. The weight has been on me so long. But I do feel inexpressibly relieved at having at last, after so many years waiting, been able to tell these

men plainly that there were two sides to the question, and that I would go if they baited me so incessantly and so foolishly. It is a great fact the masters having absolutely withdrawn their manifesto, instead of explaining and jawing, and taking the injured innocence line, which I expected. It shows how thoroughly the victory has been won at present. I only hope it will last.

*October 17th.*—Cannot feel the strain off yet, though in a way I do feel it off. Yet one thing, all these struggles, however well they end, end less well in most instances than no struggle at all. The spirit needed to carry on a great and living work is seldom the better for a fight when the fight has been from wrong grounds. True life needs to be drawn out, and all the false striving, though it must be repressed, seldom turns into healthy action. Still for a time there is peace, and so severe a lesson has been given to rebellion, that I trust never again to have the like, and at all events the ground is now clear; they know what it means, and the nursery bickering and mere naughty child work cannot well begin again.

*October 18th.*—Sundry boys complained of for cutting their names in my house; took them to the workshop, and set them each down with his penknife at a bit of oak to cut his name four times, amidst much grinning. It is a grand thing punishing without galling. . . . Have been reading Edward Denison's letters; much comforted to find how entirely my views were his, though we never knew each other; much struck, too, by some of his statements and graphic language. What tries me here so much is the having to carry on so much of the work through others. At present I feel tired and empty, a reaction after the long strain. But Edward Denison has cheered me much. One gets tempted to think it is only one's own temper and unwarranted opinion when one painfully goes on alone and in opposition, variance, or at least imperfect sympathy with the world and all about one. It is a great thing to find that one is not alone in spirit, however much alone in place one may be.

*October 19th.*—To-day my book account from Macmillan. £40 to pay on *Life Science;* about £20 more balanced by my other works. I have drawn a cheque, and send it with no slight satisfaction. I cannot afford to publish. I belong to

no clique, and it is useless to think that anything will make way by its own merits, excepting a novel, and a novel does not make way by its merits generally. I feel quite triumphant at having got this load off my back.

*October 20th.*—A quiet day; my daughters' first communion to-day; thank God. I am so grateful for it. To see the children quietly walking the path that leads to Christ is a great blessing. How small other causes would seem if one felt sure that the children were full of truth and love of Christ.

*October 21st.*—Ἀνθρώπινόν τι ἔπαθον to-day in seeing two columns of the *Times* devoted to the consecration of Rugby chapel, whilst ours remains unconsecrated, owing to the men with whom we have to do. Yet what does it really matter? "The work goes on and slacketh not." The subtle life power is beyond their power, and very likely all the more chastened and blessed because of their power.

*October 29th.*—R——, without any jaw or disagreeable, got the raising of £1700 for the chapel fabric passed this morning. R—— is a really good man, and in some respects a very able one, most honourable, and resolute in all he believes, and he does believe very high beliefs too.

*November 1st.*—Finished my carol and took it to David to-day. He likes it, so I am pleased. He is persuading me to write him a more important composition, an expansion of a poem on Roland which I showed him. I think I shall try at Christmas. I cannot before, the work absorbs me so. I am very glad, though, David is composing, and that I can help him. It gives such much greater interest to his life and work here having this higher object as a solace to the lower drudgery, not that the drudgery is not high enough in Christ's Court, and right well he does it. I shall do what I can for him. He of all the men I have had to do with here seems to me to work in the most purely unselfish, noble way, with least alloy.

*November 4th.*—Benson come and gone after a most pleasant visit to me and mine. He preached a noble sermon on the three prophets—Moses, Jonah, and Elijah, who thought their mission had failed, and told God so, and God's answers to them. He had a beautiful day, fortunately, and everything looked well. It was a comfort and pleasure to me

his being here. I am sure our intercourse with one another is a great good.

*November 5th.*—A pleasant announcement from Theodore to-day, that very likely all the money I was to get as residuary legatee of my cousin will vanish into thin air by the failure of a dishonest banker who managed her affairs. It is lucky my heart had not dwelt on this. I get my legacy of £1000, but as my brother practically applied to me to pay the £1600 which was advanced me by my trustees in my hour of darkness in old days, I shall be harder up for ready money than ever. However, I may yet get it, but if not, it is all right. God is showing me how easily He could relieve my money cares, even according to my weak ideas, if it was good for me, so I will even suppose it is not good for me, and thus look on it as a sign of His presence rather than as a loss. I was most gratified by Marie, who opened the letter, thinking it brought news of my father, not even thinking it worth while to tell me in Fairfield when she came up, and simply asking me when I came home if I knew it before. Not a word has been said since about it, nor has it ruffled our happy home and its quiet peace in the least. It is almost worth losing it to see how little it adds to or takes away from our real life. Yet to be free from immediate money cares and have something in hand would be no slight boon. But we know Him in whom we have trusted, and we will not fear or fret; at least we will try not to.

*November 15th.*—How hard it is to go on in these days, between masters, the public, and the boys; how incessant the demand on strength both of mind and body, that is, if one keeps a heart, and is not a hack, as people would make one if they could. A most distressing row in the papers about Winchester. An excellent thing that it is out, but I am so sorry for Ridding, whom I believe to be fearfully hampered and powerless when it comes to dealing with these old traditional barbarities.

*November 21st.*—In the evening Boyd, Miss Boyd, and Alington came; on Wednesday was much occupied with them. An excellent account of North Woolwich in the evening. These peeps into God's great living world are wonderfully refreshing.

*November 23rd.*—I am getting more and more convinced

that I cannot govern these men; that I have failed. I know not whether it is my own fault or theirs. But I doubt I have failed. Of course I feel no difficulty whatever in keeping up the school, or in the external success, or, if I would sacrifice my convictions of what is necessary and true for the future, of pleasing and ruling them. What I do feel and see is that the whole body of older masters has set itself resolutely against my government, and that they are determined to contest singly and collectively everything which does not please them, as on equal terms with me, and allow me no authority or influence as headmaster. My only hold on them is that they fear my going would damage their properties and risk the prosperity of the school. I don't quite see my way out of this, or how far it is good for me to struggle on. However, much that is dark clears with time. Morning comes if one will but wait, instead of rushing about in the dark and the night. It is clearly right for me to work through the settling of the new scheme, however irksome it may be. But I fear I have failed as far as Uppingham itself goes, though the wonderful and living success amongst the boys more and more comes home to me and sinks into my heart. That again complicates the problem. Have I any right, when God has put me here, and blessed the real work of the place so wonderfully and truly, to think of failure or deserting my post because of the comparative evil, though a trying one to me, of officers being mutinous and offensive. I doubt that. It is good, however, to look before and after, to sit loose in the saddle, and not be frightened at the thought of being kicked off, and of seeming failure. Outward success is not always granted. Moses was worse off than me by a long way. What a life he had of it! It may be I may have my Joshua also, and though I die without seeing my former hopes fulfilled, though I fail, a better man than I may go on and do the conquering work. I can bless and praise God for what He has let me do; and calmly and gladly fail if He will.

*February 27th*, 1873.—Heard of Walter Cornish's death to-day. Alas! that his life was so sacrificed, and he allowed to over-work till too late. Yet I mourn not. May he welcome me home when I go, good, self-denying heart that he was, and is. How thankful I feel for my champions; God has blessed us here.

*March 8th.*—This morning, too, brought me news, that my Liverpool allies have opened communications with the governors, and are thinking of fighting for the Church character of the school, and supplying funds for their part of the battle. . . . What a miracle this is! How miraculous my life has been! I am full of wonder and gratitude, that I am only half-conscious of feeling under this pressure of work and worry, but which I hope I do feel. "Help Thou mine unbelief," at all events, O Lord, for I wish to be wholly Thine. This afternoon the agreeable news that my legacy of £941 is going to be paid immediately. How many things I have to be grateful for, and yet how weary I am!

*March 9th.*—How many good things have come to me on Sundays to thank God for! Holy Communion to-day, and in the morning a cheque for £941, dear Cousin Maria's legacy came. There was a collection for N. Woolwich, and nearly twenty years ago, when I first came, in the first spring forward of the successful beginning, I promised the New Zealand Fund £100, and I paid £25, and never again till now have I had a free penny. This morning I had the pleasure of drawing a cheque for £90, which I shall send to the Bishop of Lichfield to-morrow to pay my old debt to God. . . .

After church, David came in with the proof sheets of the first numbers of our new edition of *School Songs*, with our new Uppingham Song in it. That is an event. I am greatly cheered by it. They are lying on the table, by my side, this moment as I write in the drawing-room where I sit on Sunday evening. What a difference between the idea of music when the first edition came out! and what is the case now? What may not come of School Songs? May God bless them and send labourers into His harvest.

*March 14th.*—It is curious how the shams and frauds sown broadcast all over England in the way of schools have perverted the English mind, and destroyed all knowledge and sense on the subject, whilst English legislation has been daily more and more encouraging the idea that noise is lord of all things, and that any fool who can bray, if he brays loud, is to rule. Experience and wisdom must be content either to drag the chariot or to sit and be kicked.

*March 16th.*—Had a letter from Henry this morning, to

announce his K.C.B. He is pleased. So am I too, for he well deserves much more than he is ever likely to get.

*March 24th.*—From a letter of Theodore's this morning discovered that I was £450 more in debt than I recollected. Rather damaged my breakfast, but now I am inclined to thank God for having let me forget it so many years. To thank Him still more for His wonderful delivery of me by Cousin Maria's legacy at this crisis. Really I should have been overwhelmed had it not come, just as dear old aunt's legacy came to save me from the consequences of ——'s fatal wrongdoings. How trying, too, never to be above one's work in money or strength during all these years! Yet if God be with us, what matters?

*March 27th.*—I dread also getting mixed up with the family in any business matter, and the iciest water in those regions suggests scalds to me, poor dog. Though it is a shame to say so with all their love and goodness. Another letter from my old father, who is delighted with me and Henry at present, the support I have received, and my work, and the honour Henry has had.

*April 2nd.*—Heard to-day of the death of Harry Beevor, a good fellow. What a comfort it is to be able to look forward to meeting one's departed school hereafter with happy trust!

*May 3rd.*—Christian came to me at 12 to-day about buying W. Earle's house. I have allowed him to write to K——, offering his own house for sale, and allowing twenty boys instead of seventeen in it, and whilst refusing to give any guarantee whatever, yet saying that if matters were favourable I should in turn, when he wanted to sell, try to help him to do so. Christian comes out exceedingly well in this matter. I have found no one so coming up to my idea of rightmindedness in these matters as he does. This afternoon he came to say that he was not sure whether I meant in case K—— rented, to give him the first chance of a thirty house, as if not he should not like for his own advantage to hinder the promotion of masters already here. I have had nothing of this kind before.

*May 4th.*—Yesterday I told Christian how intensely I disliked the taking of extra boys in masters' houses, and viewed it as the beginning of the overthrow of my life-work, and had only given way perhaps mistakenly because of my earnest

desire to remove as far as possible the complaints of masters, and get them to work in better spirit. I also told him that I had not undertaken to sell W. Earle's house for him, and that if he in his precipitancy had thrust his head into a noose, it did not follow that I cut him down. He had no claim, as he had clearly understood my terms beforehand, that I never even in my darkest hours had sold one hair's-breadth of my power to deal with the school business in the manner most for the good of education, and I was not likely to do so now.

*May 5th.*—Truly this is a year of trial; truly God is sifting the work and us. But I will trust in Him. Even now I can see the good in spite of present pain. Witts has sent in his resignation for Michaelmas to-day, giving as a reason my disregard of the interests of the assistant masters! Astounding fact, when I have sacrificed my fortune to doing my best for them, so that as far as I could help they should have no just complaint. He, too, whose every request I have assented to. . . . Nevertheless God's will be done. It is good they should go if they have no stomach for true work, yea, it is good we all should go, and the work perish, rather than be a rotten corruption of self-seeking under pretended zeal for education. And God has sent me many messages this half-year. Not least the bishop with his taking of Jacob for his sermon, when I had been pondering on that chapter, and taking Jacob's vow this very season. His will be done. I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. These things knock one's vanity and worldliness about one's ears uncommonly and hurt, but they do one good. I know in whom I have believed, and for whom I have worked, and no misrepresentation or aspersion of my character and motives by friend or foe can alter that. I make my appeal to God. He is sifting the work, and it tries one to the very inmost fibre, this shaking the dust and grit out, but His will be done. It is good, and Marie is as brave as brave can be.

*May 13th.*—The concert to-night; David's Cantata, The Widow of Nain, The Fair Song, The Wood, The Uppingham School Song, the first and last for the first time, and one of Wintle's. The whole concert Uppingham. What an epoch! The boys encored the school song again and again, and all rose and stood whilst it was being sung. It was a grand time

for those who can see life power and believe in seeds. Never before in England has such a thing happened as a great school having its own music in this way and rising with it. The zeal of the boys was wonderful. This stirs the heart and refreshes it. It is a burst of spring in the midst of the east winds of masters and the pelting rain of Commissions.

*May 19th.*—On Saturday Mr. Cobb from Mitchinson came. . . . His having been with Mitchinson is a great thing, for Mitchinson is a noble fellow. I have written to-night to offer him Little's house. He will come. May God bless it to us both. I had a talk with him on Sunday night, and put plainly and strongly, as I did to K——, that I expected masters to follow me quietly and loyally, and, for the sake of the work done here, to spare useless friction.

*May 27th.*—The masters going to give Witts a testimonial. This is quite right. I have subscribed £10. We should not have had our chapel but for him. We might have waited years for it.

*May 31st.*—One of those little bits of light from above which God sends to comfort and uphold His workers from time to time. To-day the præpostors held a court on a case of bullying. This evening the culprit appealed to me on being offered an appeal. I went into the head room, and found that ten boys of the Remove had denounced one of their class to the præpostors for bullying and teasing. This is a splendid triumph of internal government. The culprit pleaded guilty, but not to the extent that he was accused, and then we dismissed our witnesses and proceeded to consider his punishment, which, I laid down, was not to be what he deserved, but what would work best. He had previously had the choice given him whether he would be punished through the præpostors or by me, and he chose the præpostors. We sentenced him to six cuts with a cane on Monday. But the grand thing is this feeling of law and kindly self-government, and this guarding of their own liberties, and getting rid of the thieves' honour idea. I shall restore one of the holidays taken away, and the leave out of call over again. It is glorious. . . .

*June 2nd.*—Sent a note to John Skrine offering him a mastership. Received his acceptance this morning to my great comfort. These two lines very little represent the longing, and

prayers, and trust that I might have God's blessing on him and me in this, or the relief and strength of heart I feel at his coming. I announced it to his father at breakfast rather too abruptly, I fear, but I had some talk afterwards with him, and hope and think he approves. Skrine himself has gone to Oxford for a day. His father left at 10.30. I liked much having him here. He is so gentle and good.

*June 3rd.*—Dr. Ferdinand Hiller, the great German composer and musician, coming here next week. . . .

*June 20th.*—Sometimes the weight of living in this atmosphere of responsibility, danger, work, and weariness seems almost more than I can bear. It has done so to-day. I feel like a bird in a cage beating against the bars, longing to be free, but baffled everywhere. One thing, however, I see clearly, it is God's will that I stand here and do my duty as He bids at present; and another, that the parents care for my staying. These are great facts, and I will try and be faithful and dogged, but I dread the very sight of a master.

*June 22nd.*—Thank God for the last Sunday and the last sermon over; I feel greatly relieved. For my part, whatever may be thought of these things in days to come, I hold that truth always in the long run is good, and though men may blame me for my feelings and actions, yet a knowledge of the pain, and weariness, and doubts, and misgivings, and loneliness will help weary workers better than shining lies of eternal success. It may yet be, too, that I may fail and be overthrown in the end, as far as this place is concerned, and then it will be well that the truth should be known, or at all events my conviction, that if I gave up my cause, and would partially sacrifice the boys, and have a big, overgrown school with its false glory and increase of wealth, that I should be applauded to the echo by those who now strive against me. I have made up my mind, however, to fight it out to the last inch and not to desert my post.

*August 31st.*—Another Sunday. How time passes—how much has happened this week, and on the whole how cheering the week has been! I feel exceedingly strengthened and nerved by it. There is such a freshness of healthy support in the old boys and their visit. R—— is, I hope, going on

well. He gives a sad account of Oxford irreligion. It does give me faith to hear how the better old boys prize my morning lessons in divinity. He is most strong upon them. When I recollect with how much misgiving I introduced them, knowing how little they pay directly in examinations, and how I feared the boys might not take to them, I am most comforted to find how living they are. I feel myself how much I gain by doing it. I never comment many minutes without getting some new light myself, some clearer way of bringing out the old. They are an immense gain to me as well as to them.

*September 14th.*—How hard it is to feel the truth in love, as well as to speak it! Much work and much suffering tend to make one undervalue the less of others though it may be their best. This is not right. Yet I fear that in trying to identify masters with my work and make them fellow-workers they have pulled me, in their minds, down to them, rather than I them up to me. I seem to have failed nearly entirely in this. On the other hand, as I said above, I feel I am in danger of underrating their work, because I could have got as good in the open market any time, forgetting that I might have lighted on much worse, forgetting how much of it has been their best. This is not right. To speak kindly truth in this hard world is a difficult thing.

*October 10th.*—Really school affairs are in a nice state. What have the Eton governing body done, but had the insolence to send a most offensive document through their secretary to Hornby, and to publish it in the *Times*. Things are come to a pretty pass, when for an error of judgment the headmaster of the first school in England for rank is rated by the governors' secretary in their name. . . . The only comfort is that the more absurdities and wrongs that are committed before the question comes on in Parliament again, the better chance. . . . Then there are the squalling babies at Rugby, trying all they know to make schools contemptible, and they certainly succeed. What will it all end in?

*October 11th.*—This evening went to the Christians', and met Miss Hedley, Bessie, my dear old friend's eldest daughter, and spent a delightful evening talking with her. I was so glad to see her and renew old days, and tell how much I owe her father, and how much I revere him.

*October 19th.*—Went to the meeting. . . . Ridding was especially friendly, so, I am glad to say, was Harper. We were unanimous against fixed books and honours, which the University (Oxford) has been shoving forward again. It is most painful to see the stupid self-sufficiency with which they think they know our work better than we do ourselves. I am most thankful for this result. There were present the whole committee, Benson, Percival, Moss, Harper, Bell, Butler, myself, Ridding. I slept at Blisworth that night, and got home next morning.

*October 20th.*—Received the examiners' reports this morning. They are a caution of what may be expected if we get an examining yoke on our neck. They lay down the law in fine style, about the work, and what it should be. The Uppingham divinity work is all wrong—no knowledge of New Testament, Greek, etc., quite King Cambyses vein. How much this would have tried me in the days of my weakness, and crushed out the life, or at all events made it anxious and dangerous! Now I can afford to laugh, a little bitterly perhaps, but still to laugh. "Spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectatum ut ipsæ." This kind of thing supplies the πού στῶ for all the ignorant ill nature that may be floating about.

*November 12th.*—How strangely different the world I live in now from the world I started to live in! how painfully different! Then it was full of education and teaching, and the boys, and what was good for them. My school work was all in all. Now I am full of masters' quarrels, and what to say or do to escape from, or baffle them, and my time and brain is absorbed in tomfoolery; and I don't see how to escape from it.

*November 22nd.*—Sterndale Bennett here to-night, looking, I am sorry to say, very ill. What a shame it is that London and England should let our great musician be ground to death! I feel for him. I wish I could soothe him, and make life easier for him, and put the racer in pleasant pastures instead of his having to drag sand carts. I asked him to give us a tune, to be a memorial of his connection with us, and he promised to do so, and seemed pleased, as I hoped he would. I shall like very much to have a composition of his own.

*December 6th.*—. . . This morning I had a marvellous sign of the times, and of God's hand and life working, in a letter from a clergyman in New Brunswick, asking help on the ground of the reputation Uppingham had for missionary zeal. How wonderful!

*December 13th.*—Also finished and sent my song, "The Schoolboy in Wardley Wood," to Sir Sterndale Bennett. Both David and I were much pleased with the words. And I am so glad that our great English composer will give us a special bit of music for ourselves, and mark his connection with us. It is good for the school to be joined to great men.

*February 15th*, 1874.—Read Patteson's[1] life in the evening. I knew him well at Eton. How touching it is now to find so many whom one knew already become history. I don't know how it is; perhaps the youthful spring gone out of one, but I feel more and more daily unequal to carrying on this great work, and cowardly and shrinking from it. Yet God can bring strength out of weakness. If one can but *live* truly then it does not matter. The feeling able to do the work is not needed if one does it. Yet the feeling of shrinking and cowardice, and the desire to have finished and be released, is strange and uncomfortable. I do not, however, want to master the problem of life now, content to go on and do as I am bid by my Lord.

*February 16th.*—. . . I have been glad of one thing. Powell tells me he shall get £30 or £40 for the New Brunswick clergyman who appeals to us for help.

*February 21st.*—The pleasant news came in to-night that J—— has won the first scholarship at University College. This is very cheering. I like J—— too, and latterly he has worked well, and always been literary.

*February 22nd.*—My third sermon over. I felt to-day as I often feel, how fearful it is to be in a position of such responsibility with so much work always going on, and so little heart for it oftentimes. At least, so little heart and so much perplexity about the masters and all that part of the life. The school work is much of it a great relief. But God fashions our lives, not ourselves. Faith, faith, faith, patience and love. Never mind.

[1] First Bishop of Melanesia.

*February 25th.*—New pronunciation of Latin going on kindlily. If it succeeds I shall move the Conference to apply to the foreign universities and see whether a European pronunciation cannot be agreed on.

*February 28th.*—To-night a telegram from Irwin, saying he has won the first studentship at Christ Church. This is most seasonable.

*March 4th.*—A letter from Mrs. A.——, which will set me for weeks, perhaps, on a sort of Life Science in an easy form. I have begun. It interests me intensely if I have but the time. However, odd minutes will do a great deal, and Saturday night I nearly always get.

*March 19th.*—I feel so glad at having drawn such a sharp and decisive line between the weak traitor præpostor and the two faithful. Flogging the one soundly with the victims of his treason, while the two others saved three of the culprits from dismissal by their faith, and acting truly and altogether, lightened the load of punishment. I think this will make a great impression on the school; I pray it may. Nothing is so living as the getting the life into the school itself, and nothing of human work does this like making all the good profitable and so easy to work, lightening punishment, pardoning, rewarding whenever the good comes from themselves, and so making even the evil glad that the authorities amongst themselves have acted. . . .

All implicated are debarred from running in any race, receiving any prize for games, contending in any sport, playing in any house-match, or being present at any party given during this half-year, as well as the old boys' supper for the two in the eleven. Mr. —— talks of counsel's opinion and sending a lawyer down here. It is pain and bluster, I take it, poor wretch. But I have directed Christian to tell him that I will not suffer a single boy to be questioned except by me, that I am supreme here, and will permit no interference, though ready to meet him in any law court in the kingdom.

*March 23rd.*—Since Friday we have had ——, a Canadian schoolmaster, here, and his hearty enthusiasm and hope to do something good out there in the school way has cheered me very much. The New World is opening for the work which I have lately looked to. I feel in talking with

him the difference between talking to the blind and to one who sees. I always feel here when I venture to speak at all that it is to the blind, and to have the fresh, New World eye in here for once is exceedingly refreshing. We have talked over everything almost pertaining to schools, and I feel, as I said, refreshed and cheered.

*March 25th.*—A lawyer's letter this morning from —— about his unhappy boy. I have answered it, saying no lawyer shall ever enter this school or question one of the boys committed by their parents to my care, but that if he has any legal remedy in any court I will meet him anywhere he can cite me. Privately I have told Mr.—— what my evidence is, and how completely I can crush the poor boy. But it is worth noting if a man dares attack me in this way at the height of my power, how shameful the view taken of schools, and how immoral the pressure brought to bear on the weak, as indeed I too well know from the experience of my early days here. I feel more and more the bright, cheering effect of that Canadian. It is like a fresh breeze let into a sick-room to have had him here. I think his talks with —— and others will have done both them and me good, as giving an outside, enthusiastic, thoughtful view. I have always looked of late years to the work and the cause rooting itself in new lands. England is too far gone in wrong systems to be reformed much from within, and I feel as if my life was set free, like a bird from a cage, and had flown out of doors into free lands. Thank God for it, just at this time too when I am so weary and down in other ways.

*March 31st.*—Have been taking leave of my Easter boys. A very sad and solemn thing with so large a proportion leaving in disgrace. Poor little ——. I could not refrain from tears; he came round the table, child as he is, to my side crying, to wish good-bye. It was very piteous; may Christ deliver him and all of us. O God, it is heavy and sore work sometimes. . . . It is a solemn thing, this last night of such a quarter as this has been. May God cleanse and deliver me and this school, and wash away what has been wrongly done by me for Christ's sake. Amen.

*April 9th.*—Am engaged in writing some short anti-sceptical paper for Mrs. A.——, and, curiously enough, for her brother,

each unknowing the other's request. I shall, I hope, get some common-sense blowing fresh in on the cobwebs of young Oxford through the latter. May God bless it.

*April 12th.*—Had an invitation from the editor of the *Argonaut* to write my views of school occupations, etc. Shall decline from want of time; also I don't believe the writing and pushing is the proper way. God's ways are living work and quiet, patient doing; in His own good time He will bring fruit. . . .

*April 13th.*—This morning at the Aristotle lesson laid down some plain principles of Christian *versus* heathen philosophy. These things will bear fruit by and by. The national mind is not open enough yet to take them, but there is plenty of time. "The mills of God grind slowly," and assuredly the day will come when all shape will be recognised by right thinkers to be thought made visible, and to move in the midst of the great language of creation with a mind shut to the voice of the Creator, and determined to set aside the speaker in considering His speech, will be held an absurdity.

*April 22nd.*—Ridding come and gone. Gave us an excellent sermon on Sunday, so wonderfully appropriate to recent occurrences, that, till I asked him, I quite thought he must have heard of them, taking as his text, "If the salt have lost his savour wherewith shall it be salted." Two beautiful days for his visit. I believe it a very important fact his coming, as I look on it as the first time that a lover of truth of the aristocratic school type or popular school type has come here.

*April 25th.*—The sanitary inspector came to me to state that the town was quite in a commotion about my having taken Mr. Grimstead's house for the measles, and that it was illegal. I said if it was illegal that settled the matter, as I was the last man to do anything illegal, especially in sanitary matters. I only wish the laws were fifty times as stringent, but that I was not a little disgusted at this sudden zeal for law against me when they were so regardless of health and sanitary matters themselves. I have written to Bell to ask what the law is, as it is rather serious if I may not put a patient in any but an isolated house. . . .

To-night a telegram from Rücker saying he has got a

scholarship at Brasenose, so we have done well this year, and I am much pleased.

*April 26th.*—This morning a letter from Grant, saying he had won an open exhibition at King's. I am particularly glad of this on all accounts. I hope to get better work done.

*May 2nd.*—Mrs. Pilkington came up and spoke very feelingly about the school, and said that at the Universities our character for sending up good men and moral men stood alone. This is a happy crown to win. May God keep it true and cleanse our sins.

*May 9th.*—This morning a letter from a lady just come from Melbourne, speaking in the most casual way of the recommendations of the school to her by sundry people in Melbourne, unknown to me "and by many others there." A strange bit of modern life, to think of our work here being common talk in Australia.

*May 12th.*—It would take to the age of Methuselah to get through any ordinary business. (This of the masters' meeting.)

*June 4th.*—Went up to Bagshawe's to-day, and comforted my captain, Powell, who has broken down from overwork. It is curious how one's trials turn into blessings. I was able not only to feel with him and give him sound advice through my own sufferings and weakness, but still more to make him feel, I think, quite differently, when he found how much I had had of the same kind. He said, "I always thought you had an iron constitution." I answered, "Indeed no, for seventeen years here I never had a day of perfect health, and I owe, under God, my sitting here alive by you to-day to the care in diet and exercise I have taken ever since I went to Cambridge." I had a good deal of quiet talk with him, and asked him to Grasmere, and I think left him much comforted as well as wiser about self-training. I feel very thankful for being able to do it, and for all the painful experience that has opened my heart, and made me able to give comfort.

*June 9th.*—We are going to give a subscription to Luffenham Church, because our founder is buried there, also to have a school offertory for the Indian Famine on Sunday week.

*June 12th.*—After dinner yesterday I walked round the houses and gardens with a Mr. Greenfield, and saw a most marvellous proof of our school tone, which he observed first,—

a number of ripe strawberries bordering the boys' path to Rawnsley's house, untouched and safe. The more remarkable, because it is not only the path for his own boys, but for his class and the school generally. When I recollect my own school life it is astonishing.

*June 16th.*—My bank book and money still on my heart, much overdrawn. I really don't know what to do. It would be easy, methinks, to live differently in a private station. Perhaps I deceive myself, but I know my present place would have made me rich had I worked for money, so I will even still, as I grow old, trust in God not to let my wife and children come to trouble because of me, even if I might have been better. God is not stingy, nor does He give us our deserts only. I wish my life had started with a different idea of the Christian soldier's warfare, but God knows best. The only thing clear to me is how little we know of what is good; we move in the shadows of self even when most unselfish.

*June 21st.*—The last sermon over. A great event always. The first real feeling of possible holiday. And with it has come that strange emptiness of heart and fearfulness, which, or something like it, I suppose men feel in the pause of a battle. I cannot express it, that dull sense of much to be done and nothing to do it with, which I know only too well. This mockery almost, as it seems to me, of living in the midst of apparent success, and being thought successful, when the whole ground seems heaving under our feet, and one has learnt so utterly to expect defection, that one can scarcely trust or at least feel restful in one's dearest friends, and most decidedly know that the best hopes of one's heart are quite out of any horizon I shall ever see on earth. But life is a seed. I will have faith in the seed power.

*June 22nd.*—When I recollect myself at twenty and my ideals, how thankful I am that the fierce impatience of those days has got into orderly control. . . .

*August 17th.*—I hardly know what to think or do. My bank book is simply ruinous, and yet in this great concern, with its many interests and complete arrangements, the intellectual work, the boy and parent management work, the master management work, and the money work, I hardly know how or what to do. One thing I must do—cut down our

expenses, but as headmaster with this large establishment and family growing up, it is easier said than done. I am at my wits' ends, and not far from my heart's end, so downhearted do I feel. God help me.

*August 28th.*—A long letter from Theodore, giving the winding up of dear Cousin Maria's executorship. How wonderfully that money came in, just as I was sinking again! I must, however, now retrench, though it is very difficult to do so in my public position and varied kinds of work, all pressing upon me and demanding all my power.

*September 25th.*—A—— R—— here to-day, said he had never had so happy a life as his time here. I am so cheered at finding how much success one has had in giving happiness and therefore better life to the young. Life which they think happy in after years, when near enough to it and young enough to have no sentimental halo round it.

*September 29th.*—A very cheering letter from Fred. Rowe in India, speaking of the effect of my exhortations to truth on him. I am thankful to find the life gone out into the world, for I much fear that here it will be destroyed to a great extent before many years pass, and numbers, and gain, and sham, for a time, at all events, house here, but they cannot destroy the life in the living, though they may defile these buildings and this place.

*October 2nd.*—Walked out with Skrine in the afternoon, had a long talk about the propriety of preaching new life as the gift of Christ in sacraments, and the need of living new life—rather than the Church as the channel of life. Preaching up to the Church, not down from it. Up to it through right life rightly received and used, not down from it into right life; right life working by right shapes, not right shapes making right life.

*October 12th.*—This afternoon was our confirmation, a wonderfully solemn and cheering service. The bishop[1] gave us the very best address, except the first I think, he has ever given. It was most perfect, so simple, and so full of true power. May God keep him and guide him, for surely he is a great mind. To see and hear the boys and that touching service goes to the heart.

[1] Bishop Magee of Peterborough.

*October 19th.*—Mr. J—— has the highest opinion of Skrine, and told me that when he wrote to me about the Liverpool Institution he had Skrine in his eye. I said he would make, I thought, a splendid headmaster, but he should have two or three more years' experience, at least.

. . . . I spoke plainly to him, as I told him afterwards, because I look to him some day being a leading headmaster, and it was good he should have my experience.

*November 3rd.*—I said (to the masters) that nothing would induce me to admit an extra boy in each house. This last I think most of, because I feel sure my work here will be overthrown on this very point of numbers, and I am glad, therefore, of every opportunity of bearing witness to my conviction that it is destruction of all my work. I am glad, too, that they should see how much I gave up in past years in trying to conciliate them. Altogether it was a morning that got out more important truths for past, present, and future than I could have thought possible without raising any ill-will, but rather the contrary.

*November 14th.*—This evening a letter from young Adderley enclosing £5 to the organ fund, and offering Pateman's holding enfranchised for £2000. I have answered that it is unfortunate there is nobody competent to deal for the school, but that personally I should have nothing more to do with it in the way of making or accepting offers. I am the more led to this, from the conviction I have that my own special work here will be undone in a very few years by trustees and masters. I have little or no hope for this place being more than a good school, and as to the past it is so bitter I have no personal tie here at all. How little of what I hoped have I been able to perform, nothing scarcely in delivering teaching from rule work, and giving it liberty as thought work. The having been able to do living work in human lives and for the average boy is a great and glorious thing, yea, the best. But I long in my own poor heart for what now will never be, a reform in teaching, and men willing to work with me on this track. But the old dead rock against which I poured out in vain all my heart power in early days resisted it and exists.

*November 16th.*—A curious instance to-day of the English

way of doing business. Mr. Finch, M.P., came over to-day to call on me, to inquire how many Rutlandshire boys are in the school. He is a governor, and the governors are going to resist the turning Oakham into a middle school, and try and keep it as a grammar school of the old type. I told him plainly that a grammar school, of the old type of course, they would have, but that it was not honest and not possible with their funds to make it so. But the absurd thing is, this is the first information I have received of this. It being a fact that the governors, mere amateurs, have formed all their plans and are engaged in a hot resistance to the Government scheme, without the slightest regard to the professional knowledge to be got here, or even any knowledge of what makes the school what it is. Such is England. It really is most despairing to the skilled workman.

*December 10th.*—How thankful, too, I am for no illness in the school this half-year, and no great jaw! In fact at present things are so peaceful that I hardly know the place, and feel as if there must be a mine going to spring; so used to danger does one get.

*December 14th.*—A solemn epoch. My dear old father passed away on Friday last, December 11th. A letter was lost, so I did not hear till this morning. I was enabled by this to get through the work and practically wind up the half-year. . . . My dear old father, how thankful I am to have had a brave good man as my father according to his lights! I thank God for him. And my dear, dear mother—O may God keep her and comfort her; sixty-three years married, and for the last fourteen or fifteen all her daily work and thoughts centred on him, and he is gone. But a more saintly woman in practice and faith I believe cannot be found. God does and will support her with His holy comfort.

*December 22nd.*—This time of rest and thought is a great boon to me. I feel more and more disinclined to have anything to do with public life and all its noisy clatter, where every one is playing his own tune, and barrel-organs which can go with a handle are worth much more than violins which want a soul. In religion most of all, every one at present seems to be hunting for some specialty to make it difficult to be a Christian, or else to be throwing down all barriers into a lawless

wolfdom of power worship. Thank God there is still quiet work,—work, at least, if not quiet; and thought, and calm recesses of unambitious peace, and faith, and divine calm ordering and commands from the great King.

*January 29th*, 1875.—The visible results have indeed been crippled fearfully by the want of elastic co-operation, and little, very little been done in teaching, compared with what might have been done with less self-willed subordinates, but the spirit of life has been in it, and has gone forth and will sow itself and bear fruit in happier places. So now I turn to my work once more, with many great comforts, many blessings, and the sting greatly taken out of the ills, though at the price of all repression of feeling for this place.

*February 18th.*—Once more a book of my diary begun. O God bless the life that is to come. Whatever these pages tell, whether they stop or go to the end, may it be to Thy honour on earth, and for Thy truth. Bless me and mine, O God, this night and evermore. Bless this school, O God, and all who teach for Thee. Have mercy, O God, on us Thy unworthy servants. Yesterday I heard from India that Lake, an old pupil, had done very well in his language examinations, and had been appointed interpreter to his regiment. Also that Herr Joachim, the great violin player, will come here on the 10th of next month and play to the school. This pleases me.

*February 19th.*—Wrote sundry cheques to-night, and as usual rather down. How money cares all one's life squeeze the life-blood out of one's heart, and what a wringing pain they are! The old sores, too, of the long agony are only half-healed. Yet it is shameful for me to be faithless. What troubles me most is the wide surface and the many sides on which one's money has to go. I fear, too, I ought to be more careful, though indeed my own wants are not many.

*February 27th.*—Yet I have been cheery. I commended my cause to God last night, and tried to put away vexation, and pledge myself not to desert my post till He gave the word, and I feel He has answered me with "Not yet," or at least, "Not for these pettinesses, which are petty," for I feel not to care for them to-day from an inward power. One great pleasure has come to me, I am reading German

with sufficient ease now to insure my going on, as it is no labour, and I have some interesting books; this pleases me very much. My Whitehall sermon is also practically finished, and I am satisfied with its main purport, come weal, come woe, or come nothing from it.

*March 1st.*—I find it hard, now my dream of united work has broken up, and the human interest which it gave has vanished, to bear the friction of the petty life here and the paltry ignorances and hindrances of the confounders. But I know it is wrong. I know I ought to be faithful and quiet. But to have to work at work one cares for intensely, work with human beings as its object, and do it with men some of whom one mistrusts in the spirit of their work, is a severe strain, for it never ceases. But I know this self-feeling is mean. I ought to love God's will and rejoice in His blessing here.

*March 4th.*—A letter from Mr. —— to-day; this will do me good, as I was as usual touched with the life of it, and the sense of doing a living work here came into my heart freshly from his words. I thank God for it. My German reading goes on well. I am glad of this in a mild way. It has been a great giving up the not becoming a German scholar, but the work would not allow it, and I don't regret it, though glad to make away a little with it.

*March 8th.*—The great question of the new scheme, new terms, new school construction, all to be done amongst jealous, self-opinionated men, weighs like a great cloud over all my sky. I am getting old, too, hope has gone, and many selfish alleviations with it, but God's work stands out more plainly perhaps for that, and I will try and do it.

*March 11th.*—In the afternoon, after going to the races, I went to the rehearsal and was introduced to Joachim and the rest. In the evening we had a most wonderful concert. . . . Joachim said he was delighted with the Cantata, and passed very high praise on the boys. I was greatly struck with Joachim; he seemed to me a man of great power of thought and character, full of life observation. He observed on the maps we had up, which interested him much, and he was down on the Pictorial Grammar at once. When I told him I felt sure no nation would ever be really

educated till its poor had their heads cleared by such a method in their own language, he said, "Have they got it in Germany? was it in the Vienna Exhibition?" I said, "Oh, no, our own International Exhibition rejected it." He said, "Oh, too simple for them; Columbus's egg, yes. Are there any photographs of them? can I get them, etc.?" I told him No, but I sent at once for the *Gradual*, and gave him a copy. He is the *only man* who has ever been alive to the possible future of this invention. . . .

Well, I said I would not grumble again. I prayed God to let me know His will and He has. First He has cleared away the fumes of self-love out of me, and I see clearly as I used to,

> That though it blow or cold or hot,
> The work goes on and slacketh not.

These troubles vex and torture me, but have not really stopped the work, nor will do so; and what has brought me to see it first, was this strange recognition of Joachim's of the teaching work here; then dear old Mrs. Symes stayed behind to wish me good-bye, and said, almost with tears if not quite, "that the great happiness of her latter days had been the knowing me and the work here." This perception of the life power breathing in it came into my heart like a fresh, clear breeze and freshened my whole soul. Then this morning we had a letter from the Countess K—— at Wiemar, saying the same kind of life truths about us, and how our life cheered them. So I blessed God for cheering us with their view and feeling of our life, and we will try to cheer them.

She also said she was greatly interested in *Life Science*, and was going to send it to one of the greatest German educators who had the management of the Crown Prince's children, and to others; so these wonderful testimonies to the *Life* and to the secret growth of it all came in this twelve hours of last night and this morning, and my whole world is widened and lighted up with new life and blessing, and I pray God to let me do His work manfully, and give me strength, as He has given me some sight of His blessing. To-morrow I go to town to preach; it is very distasteful to my feelings, but clearly my duty, and shall I not gladly do what God bids me? May He bless my message and make me a προφήτης.

*March 16th.*—My prayer for guidance has been wonderfully answered, and I feel quite clear of the petty annoyances and able to laugh at them. It is not pleasant, but I see how utterly purposeless it all is, and how little if at all it touches the real life of the school. A spring day to-day though cold. Primroses out in the woods. Walked out with Skrine. I am thankful to say he is thoroughly inoculated with the intelligent teaching idea, though seeing its difficulties. This is full of hope. So though there is much before me that is very revolting, I feel once more something of God's free Spirit.

Just been up to Bagshawe's house to speak to the house, and to punish three boys for disgraceful conduct to L—— on his leaving. Poor L——, I fear they have made his life a very sore one here. But I trust I have exposed their meanness, and said words they will not lightly forget. These things are great trials, but great blessings also; they enable one to renew and freshen up the great truths by which the school lives, and whilst their hearts are softened by shame and fear, to press them home in a vivid way. May God in His mercy bless us all.

*March 24th.*—The reading has been excellent. I am much pleased at that, much pleased also at Macmillan's getting a first class; he is a most deserving fellow, and has worked excellently, whilst ——, one of the best scholars I have turned out, only got a second, as he has frittered away his time in other subjects, and lost the wonderful life training of turning on the mind resolutely, which is given by doing *the work set* with all the heart. He is, however, a good fellow.

*March 30th.*—I went over accounts with Bagshawe this morning to test my estimate of a boy's cost. The food costs for thirty-six weeks from £17 to £17 : 10s.; this includes everything—washing, clothes, and bed linen £5, and then house rent, servants, furniture, wear and tear, taxes, etc., make it mount up to £45, and if the greater expenditure at which one's whole establishment has to be kept up is taken into account, it reaches £50 per boy.

*April 3rd.*—Back from Liverpool; immensely cheered and strengthened by my visit. What a marvel it is that God has given me two such friends and powers as Mr.

Jacob and Mr. Birley. They have thoroughly taken my point of view that Uppingham now should furnish a true standard of good payment for true work, and they will strive heartily for our terms. They will also see how money may be raised to meet immediate wants. Indeed, if masters don't prevent it, everything is in good train. We shall have great difficulty, no doubt, but we shall do it. I had some good talks with them, and was exceedingly glad to find that Mr. Birley thoroughly grasped and felt deeply the all importance of keeping the numbers down. This holds out more hope for the future than I have yet had. Altogether I have been greatly comforted.

*April 9th.*—A Mr. M——, a Lincolnshire clergyman, came to get what school knowledge he can. In second school with me; in the afternoon I had a long talk with him, and have been very open with him, explaining both what has been done and what has not been done. I am to have another talk with him to-morrow. I think he is a real man; if so, we have inoculated another intelligent man with some school truths.

*April 15th.*—To night at 7.15 we went in to hear Mr. Holdich play his organ for us for the first time. It was to me a touching hour when I got up in the chancel on the front seat near the harmonium, and looked down the chapel on our little company. . . . I am most thankful for this blessing; it is another bit of visible work done.

*April 18th.*—The choir practised in chapel to-night for the first time, a glorious reality. How the grand music rolled through the space and lingered in the roof! Perchance a thousand years hence that roof or those walls may fill with prayer and praise, and the music we first heard to-day be rolling on. Amen.

*April 23rd.*—There is a most distressing revelation come to us of bullying in C——'s house, right against the spirit of all our work. . . . I am troubled and perplexed beyond measure by it. Then I have been exceedingly distressed this evening by Marie telling me that my two last sermons were open to the charge of being preached *against the masters.* It searches my heart in the most painful way. I did not mean it. God bring good out of it; He judges, not men, and this weary life will come to an end in His good time.

*April 26th.*—A practice in chapel with the whole choir to-night; it was glorious. The number of the school 329. 14 day boys, 315 boarders. Lower school full also.

*April 27th.*—Some of my governors to-day did not know that I had years ago *stopped the numbers of the school* from increasing!

*May 5th.*—Had a satisfactory talk with Mullins about the observance of Ascension Day. Next year I intend to have Holy Communion after morning service, and to preach on it as the day of the year on which we will dedicate our working day life specially to God. Rawnsley asked me to have my last sermons printed, as the boys had been asking for them. So I have taken them to Hawthorne.

*May 7th.*—I took a walk yesterday with Skrine, and was delighted to find that he has become alive himself, keenly alive to the teaching question, and the evil of the old system. I really now have one disciple who not only unconsciously knows some of the views by which common-sense and principles lead up to the rules, and the rules are only common-sense and principles stated as results, but also consciously sees the impassable gulf there is between the new and old, and the deadness of the old. This comforted me. But it has been a desperately tight half-year.

[A master had said that a boy in his class must go, as he could not stand him.]

H—— came to me about it, and I told him I did not understand being beaten by a boy; that I could not and would not act against any boy except for such overt acts as could justly be produced in court; that the boy should not go, or the example be set in the school of a boy being beyond master's management.

*May 28th.*— . . . To-night I went up and thanked R——'s house for their zeal in clearing themselves and the school from cribs and dishonest work, and it is an infinite pleasure to me. It is a great onward step. The being able to praise is the battle won, and never before have all ranks in a house worked so well together for truth.

*June 1st.*—Took a walk with ——. Talked education, and of the lectures on composition and the artistic eye that I had been giving my boys. How education, if true, is not

bookworm work, but the giving the subtle power of observation, the faculty of seeing, the eye and mind to catch hidden truths, and new creative germs. If the cursed rule-mongering and technical terms could be banished to limbo, something might be done. Three parts of teaching and learning in England is the hiding common-sense and disguising ignorance under phrases.

*June 15th.*—I had to dismiss that poor wretch —— to-night for drinking. After all his warnings it is almost incredible. Four others implicated: it is very sad. Two of the præpostors brought it before us. It was very encouraging to see the perfectly simple matter-of-course way in which it was done. This made the sneaking of the others seem a light thing. Still it is hard to bear and pitiful to have to do. Poor silly wretches, I do pity them; to see them selling their lives for such meanness.

*August 27th.*—Our great day over. The old boys come and gone, and the trustees' meeting,[1] the most important since the school was a school, also over, and all well. . . . It is wonderful, a new world has rolled in. The intrenched camp in which I have had to live is no more, and a friendly country instead has opened. I could scarcely realise myself, indeed, I only half feel or a quarter what I know I shall feel of this vital difference of friends to deal with instead of opponents, and no more responsibility as single and solitary upholder of a policy about which I had no friend to consult, and in carrying out which many a hinderer from within. This solitary responsibility is over, and law and recognised position, and friends to manage, have succeeded to it. Thank God for His mercies. How He has brought it to pass in time! It is marvellous: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, then were we like unto them that dream." I am like one who dreams. I cannot yet feel that the twenty years of fog and cloud and cold have rolled away. Θεῷ δόξα ἐν ὑψίστῃ.

*August 28th.*—The masters, I think, are greatly astonished at the things having been done which I wanted done. Part of their opposition I believe to have been a frightened effort to do themselves what they believed I couldn't do; just as a

[1] The first under the new scheme.

timid person seizes the reins of the driver when the horse starts and does his best to upset the vehicle. However, now that is over, and some at all events are repentant, all I take it wish to be quiet. . . . I do not think I ever went at such a rush and high pressure as during the last fortnight. Not that there was much anxiety; I have had that worse ten thousandfold, but the rush and the strain and the pace were tremendous. It is well over. And I do thank God with all my heart for my changed world.

The old boys' gathering is wonderfully pleasant. Nothing strikes me more than the happy freedom of it. They are all like great merry babies, so utterly unrestrained, and so utterly buoyant and simple in their merriment, without the least fear that anything will ever go wrong. It is the freshest, cheeriest air and sunshine possible with them.

*September 2nd.*—Earle came in to ask about his terms and "vested interest" question. I must say he was most gentlemanly, as he always is. I explained to him what I had done, and meant to do, and he professed himself satisfied, and we parted all right. Now he acknowledged so quietly the justice of the basis. I have taken into consideration his long service here, and his thoroughly good work always, both as house master and class master for so many years, which, though not in my way, has been in his way most excellent; and I have written to tell him that I will take no count of his usher's salary in the new terms, but leave it him untouched, and that I think the trustees will be quite willing I should. It is a great relief having that question off my mind, and I am pleased, too, at being able to do a pleasant act of recognition of work done.

*September 10th.*—Twenty-two years ago I came into this house as headmaster, and now Θεῷ δόξα. I do thank God for these twenty-two years of blessing, work indeed and pain, danger, almost death, but blessing unspeakable, and life and promise of life. How strange, too, that such a complete cycle should be comprised in my time; the rise and establishment of the school, and then this great settlement of it by the scheme on its new basis. . . . I am thankful on the anniversary to feel less haunted, more peaceful than I have been for weeks on weeks. I feel it is good to serve, good to work,

good to suffer, and that God does indeed bless. I want no other reward than strength and will to serve Him, and heart to see and feel Him. May His holy power rest in this work of school. May He bless all my darlings in this house. May He bless all His warriors in and from this school. Amen.

*September 19th.*—Been taking leave of my sixth form and others who go; a solemn but cheering thing. To-night I had no one to part with in sorrow or anger. I feel well pleased with all. Dear old B—— goes—such a good, quiet, true-hearted fellow.

*September 23rd.*—I could not help feeling to-night, as I sat by my sixth form at the lecture, how pleasant a profession a schoolmaster's would be, if one could only get rid of the masters. . . . For one hour I spend in thinking over and freshening the boy work, I spend three in masters' squabbles, letter-writing to malcontents, and cares of this kind. However I now know how little one's own judgment of what is best for true life can tell of it, since that is best for true life which comes out of the truest life, and the truest life is that which the cross most chastens into unselfish effort and quiet living. Thus no man can tell what will make his true work best, since he cannot tell what will make his true life best.

*Sunday, 24th.*—A blessed day of rest to me. On Sundays I can gather my thoughts and think of blessings; on week days I must fix my thoughts and get through as I can. . . . I begin work to-morrow with no outside infliction going on for the first time these many weeks. How strongly it comes home to me, that it is not what we do or say that God uses, but our lives, and how immeasurably my life has been raised by the trials and waste of time that to a great extent have destroyed the intellectual power of the work done.

*September 30th.*—I am sure any one reading these records will be astonished at the amount of time taken up by useless master jaw. I am sure half my available time and more than half my strength has been consumed in this useless way. . . . I am astonished myself what a mere fringe of time and thought I am able to give directly to the boys who are my main work. Fortunately I must be in school a certain number of hours daily; there I am secure.

# CHAPTER IX

## CORRESPONDENCE

### 1864–1875

IT will have been seen that in a peculiarly vivid way life presented itself to Thring's mind as a battlefield between good and evil, between right and wrong. This thought was always in his mind as he trained his boys; he judged them in after days by the way in which they bore themselves in the fight. The influence which he exercised over them was far from ending with the close of their school career. In great numbers of cases the tie became closer, the influence even more direct and inspiring, as they began to take their part in active life. It was only natural that the university successes of his old pupils should be at once communicated to one who had given them so much of their literary training. It was not so much a matter of course that they should instinctively turn to him when forced to make critical decisions in life; when hard pressed by religious doubts; or when, in country parishes, in busy city life, or in foreign lands the social, moral, and political questions with which they had to deal presented to them perplexities which they could not solve, or made them anxious to arrive at first principles of conduct or

thought. Yet under such circumstances his old boys did constantly turn to him for advice or sympathy, and they never turned in vain.

Reference is frequently made in his diary to correspondence of this kind which must have made no slight addition to his heavy burden of toil. It was a burden gladly borne, for he looked upon the confidence with which his old boys approached him as one of the greatest rewards of his teaching life.

And their confidence had in turn its reward. "Like the blast of a trumpet, breathing strength and courage," Lewis Nettleship writes from Balliol of one of his letters, and what Nettleship felt in Oxford, other workers and thinkers felt in many remote corners of the world.

"The only man on earth to whom, since manhood, I cared to go for advice," writes one old pupil. "He was the one man to whom I practically owed everything, and the one man on whose advice I could rely," says another. The expressions are quoted because they are typical. To have created such a feeling in even a few minds was of itself no insufficient reward for a life's work.

Only a few examples of this correspondence with old pupils can be given. Those have been selected which seem to best illustrate his manner of thought and his methods of dealing with life questions.

Of the first series of these letters, inserted here for the sake of chronological unity, a word must be said. Any one who ever knew Lewis Nettleship intimately must have become aware of the powerful influence which Thring had exerted over his curiously subtle and interesting mind. Nettleship constantly quoted with reverence the opinion of his headmaster; for his reputation he had the most sensitive regard. Twenty-five

years ago, in the Common Room of Balliol College, I happened to remark to a friend that I was about to pay my first visit to Uppingham. Nettleship, then an entire stranger to me, at once crossed the room, introduced himself and asked me to breakfast with him. I found that his sole object was to give me what he considered the necessary clues for understanding Thring's work and character. With the same feeling, ripened and strengthened by the lapse of time, he promised years afterwards to prepare for this biography a study of his headmaster as he had known him in the class-room. His untimely and lamented death upon the Alps prevented the completion of a task which he had undertaken with loyal alacrity.

I can only atone for this irreparable loss by inserting some extracts from the correspondence which passed between the master and his pupil.

From his earliest entrance at the school Nettleship attracted Thring's attention. "This boy will go far," he says in his diary, after reading one of the lad's first bits of composition work. Throughout his school course he watched his development with keen interest. It was the period when the work of construction was going on most actively at Uppingham; when every nerve was being strained to give to the school soundness of character within as well as completeness of external structure. Nettleship left Uppingham in 1865, having in the previous autumn opened his brilliant Oxford career by being first on the list for the Balliol Scholarships. At this point the correspondence opens.

To R. L. Nettleship.

*November 25th*, 1864.

I congratulate you heartily, and it would be affectation to deny that your success is of great importance to me and the school. But you know my feelings. I look onwards; real work is real work whether defeated or victorious, and the same heart feeling that would have made me welcome you home unsuccessful, prevents me from looking at this as the end of all things, but rather as your true start. I rejoice exceedingly; to me personally it is a very great reward of work. I know you will appreciate what I say, and amidst the general tumult of joy not misunderstand the calmer but perhaps deeper welcome of your true friend. . . .

A short time after the date of this letter Nettleship had to write to him of the death of a brother who had also been at Uppingham, and adds:—

I can scarcely help remembering that the last time I wrote to you was to tell of my success at Oxford. The closeness of the two events brings home to me what you said some little time ago at breakfast about the helplessness of intellect when it comes in contact with great realities, for I have never been at a deathbed before.

To the Same.

Firbeck Hall, Rotherham (*no date*).

Indeed, your sad news does very much concern Uppingham. I can assure you in many a weary day and painful hour of work, and danger and doubt, the thought that I was not afraid to meet my dead, nay, looked with joy to the time when we should meet again in that happy other world, has been a great comfort and support to me. I am thankful that the same thoughts have come into your own mind. You will not wonder now how deeply I feel, and how anxious I am to try to make others feel in this busy gladiator English life of ours, how utterly unreal the gladiator power is, how entirely the

intellect is an instrument at its best; how fatal an instrument at its common estimate and self-worship. "The ungodly which is a sword of thine." May it not well be that one of the purposes of your dear brother's death may in God's counsels be just what you have found it—the impressing on you in the hour of your first great worldly victory the glad solemn reality that it is in itself nothing, and that he, dear, good, shy fellow, may have been nobler and better—at all events, that he is taken home to Christ. In the ungodly coming time, if you live and serve Christ through a "life of shocks," this may be a perpetual memory of love and hope, with love keeping your heart pure and simple on dangerous paths—a blessing of blessings, though shrouded to-day—a link never to be broken, for no earthly power can break it, binding you closer and closer as you go on. Believe me, however much I have been tempted sometimes to make our school renowned, and been inclined to repine in time of danger and almost ruin at the slow ripening of hope deferred (*ἀνθρώπινόν τι ἔπαθον*), my own heart within never swerved from the calm conviction that ruin would be better than ungodly honour, and intellect idolatry, and much as I rejoiced in your success (*ἀνθρώπινόν τι πάσχω*), yet I did rejoice more in believing that you felt with me in this than in the success itself, and now over your brother's grave, in the presence of our departed, we can still more deeply realise what is real; how glorious it is to work for Christ, and yet that whether it is high work (so called), or praise ordained out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, it is all nothing in itself—only valuable as the dedication of all our being to Christ. . . .

### To the Same.

*September 27th*, 1865.

I send you your medal with great pleasure, also a small book of prayers, to serve as a memorial of my conviction that the only thing worth living for is to serve God, and the truest power on earth prayer. May you find it so too.

### To the Same.

(On winning the Hertford Scholarship)

*February 23rd*, 1866.

I congratulate you heartily. The news came in during afternoon school, so I walked in and just let all the classes out, so a halo of satisfaction settled on the afternoon. Thank you for your kind acknowledgment. It is a reward to me, a very great reward, to see you doing so well, as I know you rate success at its true value, and will, I trust, always continue to work and win, not forgetful of what true glory is.

### To the Same.

(On winning the Ireland Scholarship)

*March* 1867.

Wyndham's telegram is just in with the good news. Perhaps in your own life's work, if it is weary and has been dangerous, you may guess how much I feel the rolling away the reproach from the school of want of power to win. But above all, I rejoice and thank God for having given me two like yourself and S——, who, I trust, will wield true weapons from true hearts "in the wild hours coming on," for His Church and people, as it seems, long after I am gone to rest.

### R. L. Nettleship to Rev. Edward Thring.

*January 21st*, 1868.

There are many things about which I should have liked to talk to you. However much I may try to do whatever comes to my hand to do, I cannot help from time to time looking forward to the time when I must probably choose my profession for life. I have always rejected any idea of going to the bar, as I cannot see wherein the highness of such work consists, and I am almost sure my heart would never be thoroughly in it. There remain practically the Church and

teaching. The first seems to me the highest of all if only it were possible. But (you will not mind my speaking what I feel, though it may be wrong) I could not with a free conscience go into the Church as I am now or as I am likely to be for some time to come. To do such work requires a foundation of absolute certainty, and that I do not feel that I have. You used to say that comparatively few people really believed even in a God. On this and certain other fundamental questions I think I may dare to say that I believe—believe, I mean, in the deepest sense. But there are innumerable lesser points which must occur to any man who has to use the Bible and the Church services for other people besides himself, and for other people too sometimes on their deathbeds—points about which, if a man feels only the possibility of doubt, he can only work with half of himself. God knows, it is not pride of intellect that makes me say this. I believe in nothing more strongly than in the necessity at a certain point of belief without proof. But I cannot crush reason and remain a man. I see quite enough at Oxford of doubting for doubting's sake to make me abhor such a thing myself; but the abuse of some must not be allowed to stigmatise all. I cannot help believing myself that there is far more in common between men of different theological opinions than they themselves will allow; that the truth is far wider than any one man or school can comprehend. But until this is more recognised and the Church in some way or other made really Catholic, there must be many who long to go in but are obliged to stay out.

If, however, one cannot do the highest thing, teach in the Church, there is left what (as I have learnt from you to consider it) the next highest thing, to teach outside it, using teaching in its true and widest sense; and I suppose I need not try to look forward to any better end than this. I should like, if possible, to stay up at Oxford for perhaps three years after my degree, and during that time to read for my own improvement, *i.e.* to try to some extent to counteract the effect of reading for the Schools, which must be of necessity superficial and deceptive. I think I could do this without any danger of lying fallow, or even of simply indulging intellectual appetite. However, it is very likely that circumstances

may oblige me to try to make money immediately. Anyhow, I think I should look to eventually teaching either at the university or at a school. Writing, too, is very enticing, though of course not for a long time to come, and on the whole I try to discourage the idea.

I cannot finish this letter, which will, I am afraid, already be getting troublesome to you, without repeating my acknowledgments of what I owe to you. I know that work such as yours carries its own reward with it, and does not want acknowledgment to confirm it, but I will do it if it is only for my own satisfaction. In all troubles and difficulties which I have had (and what they call success does not seem to make life easier, but rather the reverse), the truth which I learnt at Uppingham has been my one great certainty, growing not weaker but stronger. Certainly in many ways it is very bitter to look back at school life and to think what might have been done that was not done; yet, on the whole, I must dare to say—*αἴλινον αἴλινον εἰπὲ τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω.*

### Rev. E. Thring to R. L. Nettleship.

*January 22nd*, 1868.

"As regards profession, I shall willingly give you a post here if you choose school life, and I believe you would not find anything elsewhere so satisfactory to you, at all events for learning the work. I can well believe the difficulties you feel about taking Holy Orders. . . . I am sure you are not led by intellectual pride. How intellectual pride is possible, excepting between man and man, is to me inconceivable. It is the greatest proof of a God and rebellion against God that the human mind can stand for a moment on a clod in the centre of an universe which existed before it was conscious, and will continue to exist irrespective of its consciousness, and measure itself with infinity of knowledge, and be *proud* of its almost total ignorance even of how the machine works. It needs an evil spirit and his power to account for such a marvel of ignorance. But yet without in the least being led by intellect worship you may very likely not put it in its right place. Indeed, you are sure (for this is the problem of

life) not to see the bearings and relations to each other of many momentous questions, and, as I have often said, there is no lie like dislocated truth. I should rather vary your statement of being ready to believe at a certain point without proof, and say, "That proof is so solid and broad up to a certain point that we may then trust safely where we are comparatively ignorant," *e.g.* Adam and Eve *knew* that they were in a glorious world, *knew* that they were happy, *knew* if they knew anything that God gave them all this, *knew* therefore that God wished them well and loved them, *therefore* they ought to have been sure that God could not have told them a mean and jealous lie about the tree of knowledge, even though they did not know the reason of the law. This is a type of God's word in the world, and its rejection always. I quite think that there is far more in common between earnest men of all opinions than is generally supposed. Nay, I go so far as to say I heartily love and sympathise with all truly earnest workers, however opposed to my own convictions and however necessary it may be for me to keep out of their way. Phariseeism is rampant everywhere; living life is in all parties rare, and without doubt the publican and harlot whose feelings are not seared are nearer the kingdom of heaven than the Pharisee, whatever name he gives himself. Neither can I doubt that in the great elemental mixture of the now opening world it has pleased God to confound and shake Forms, even those forms which enshrine His own divine gifts, to a fearful extent, in order to throw men out of carnal supports on to the life problem within themselves more and more. For even a Sacrament becomes a carnal form when separated from growth and made an end, not a means. The manna misused bred worms and stank. . . .

Believe me, I value intensely both your recognition of my work (life is very weary and desert-like sometimes when health fails and troubles vex), and also your continued communion with me on subjects of the deepest interest to both of us. Believe me, too, that life has been so varied and trying to me both in deed and thought that you will always find sympathy and help if I can give it in any difficulties, however much you may think my opinion likely to differ. I have thought on all these life-subjects for many years and from

many points of view, and at least have learnt something of my own ignorance and the love of Christ.

### To the Same.

*May 23rd*, 1868.

My little poem, curiously enough, as it happens to coincide in time with the subject of your questions, was composed quite irrespective of Browning. I did not even know he had written on it, as my edition seems not to have got it in, and I did not know till I had sent it to you that your brother had commented on it. It was suggested, if it can be called so, by Goethe's poem of the *Veilchen*, a pretty translation of which was sung at our last musical evening, and as they sang my heart wandered through the vista of my life dreamland or factland past and to come, and the thought of standing at bay came like a great comfort to me, and seized and haunted me till it pushed out into this ballad, taking that shape partly from the *Veilchen* metre, partly from my having read some German ballads lately. Roland died at Ronces Valles, it is said, betrayed and left in the rear with his detachment after an invasion of Spain. I do not know whether Boabdil was the Moorish king's name, and Count Bertrand is fictitious. I have no books to refer to at present; if the names won't do I shall alter them by and by. As to the lost battle, it seems to me that all true working life is to the worker of the nature of the lost battle: day by day there is such a pouring out of seemingly wasted blood; and success, as it is called, is such a mockery, that the feeling of the lost battle is always at hand the more one succeeds. Men praise the things one does not fight for, and mock the things one does, and their praise does not please, and their sneers do wound. Then all the heights and depths of sin and power against one become more and more visible, while the human motives fall away like scaffolding, alas! from an *unfinished* building, and leave the heart dependent on faith alone, and too faithless to depend faithfully. So weary and wounded, with all the excitement of untried powers gone, and all the elastic physical push going, perpetually finding evil where one hoped

for good, personal mortifications which cause extra labour, danger at hand and the clouds closing round the future of the good cause, man trudges on in the glare of a success which is most enviable to people sitting in the shade, but not unfrequently makes one of the trials. It *is* crucifixion, and there lies the comfort and the strength; otherwise, but for that, what successful man could stand the bitter knowledge of how little can be done, and the utter ignorance of how much is true and living of that little? So long as the world lasts, Christ's cause in the world seems to those who are growing old—and must seem—the lost battle, with the paradox "in the lost battle *we* have won"; the inward feeling that there is a victory unseen, unknown, the great reward of seeing and loving Christ, however dim the sight and love may be. . . .

After mentioning that his brother John had decided to abandon law and take up painting as a profession, Nettleship writes :—

### R. L. Nettleship to Rev. E. Thring.

*March 8th*, 1869.

What I wanted more particularly to tell you is that his change has confirmed me in my idea of going to London eventually. I mean in this way:—Throughout my classical and other work my chief interest has been in the question of ancient and modern art. It was so latterly at school, and has certainly been so up here. I mean by art what you used to teach us to think it—all expression of high thought, whether music, or poetry, or sculpture, or painting. I suppose I am right in saying that the way in which you taught what they call "scholarship" tended distinctly to make one think of the *form* of ancient and modern artistic expression rather than of language as a subject of philological or even (primarily) grammatical interest. Anyhow, it is here, certainly, that my real interest in the Classics has lain. When I talked of going to the bar it was with the idea that London was the place of all others in England where art, ancient and modern, could really be studied. Whatever drawbacks I feel there are

in a London life, you certainly are there most near to the best centres of music, painting, and sculpture. My brother of course has always been very strong in urging me to make this the study of my life, and his own life as an actual artist gives me a fresh impulse. I may speak freely to you without being suspected of conceit. What I feel is that the subject of the relation of ancient and modern art, the true vocation and meaning of art and its place under Christianity, in a word (you will understand what I mean), the "philosophy" of art, is a subject of intense interest and importance, while it is one upon which scarcely any one says a true word. Of course Ruskin has done a great deal, but only in a certain direction. I also feel that my classical training would give me a kind of starting-point, and would help me in trying to get at the truth. Please do not think that I want to write; I do not; but I want to study art, and (I say it in all humility) I think it is what I am best fitted for. I say I think so, because, though I have thought a good deal about it, it is always hard to separate mere fancies from the truth. If I am right, I think now that it would be a false step to go to the bar and try to do the two things at once, having really no true love for the one, except so far as I could make myself love what became a duty. Still I am not clear that it is not better to have something, some common work and duty, which should act as a sort of corrective to the mere life of study. I have said a great deal about myself, and perhaps a great deal of nonsense; but if so, you will tell me.

### To R. L. Nettleship.

*March 10th*, 1869.

I was exceedingly interested by your letter. It seemed to me so strange to hear from your lips for the first time one of my own dreams of a life that might be passed if one had two to live coming out as a thing to be done. I have little means of judging how far this or that in one's work hits or misses, but you have assuredly read it right. Philology I look on as a scientific toy totally unfitted for school training, and unless pursued in a very vast and original way as one of the vanity

traps of the day. Grammar and language wielding I do, of course, consider most valuable school work, but it is work, and though I have done much in it (*pace* the *Saturday Review*, etc.) which another generation will practise, if not acknowledge, nevertheless, as I said, it is work. But I have always striven to make our literary training here a great artistic lesson in the sense you speak of art; to make it a living thing, to join together the ages, and show how thought in heathen times worshipped form and beautiful shape, and how thought in Christian times worships expression and beautiful life, and to weave together the principles of skilful power at work, so as to show the proper proportions, the true sources, the right use, and enable a right judgment to judge correctly of each. You must come and spend a week or so at Grasmere whether you go to Switzerland or not. We have so much to talk over. . . . You cannot think how you stirred my deeps this morning. . . . It startled me so, hearing from you in that way. I never suspected it, and though I don't quite see how you will carry out your views, that, I am sure, will come if you are to do so. As to writing, ultimately, of course you will; you won't be able to help it, but wait long and well till you can't help it. In God's work there is no hurry, no, not even when He employs men, and if He blesses you with the seeing heart and eye He will sooner or later bring out the harvest in the best way. A holier and higher subject could not be taken, or one, I believe, more truly a work of Christ. To me every hour of true life has been an opening of fresh doors of interest and truth. And drudgery; and inexpressibly bitter as much of my life as life has been, nevertheless the perpetual feeling of truth and reality widening, deepening, warming, enlightening, has been a more than full reward. May it be so with you. Do nothing, ὑπὲρ μόρον—that is my great rule—but day by day do the day's demand with your might, and wait on circumstances. Θεῷ δόξα.

There is this note in the diary :—

*March 9th*, 1869.—A strikingly interesting letter from Nettleship this morning about his plan of life, letting out what I had never suspected, his great love for art in the sense of the

highest expression of thought in words, painting, sculpture, etc., and his desire to devote himself to searching it out and putting it in a true light, which has never been done. It is strange; this is one of my inner dreams. I never thought so much had come out, and he refers to my having, if he read it right, always taught this at school, and that this had been his interest. It is very wonderful. May God bless us both. God grant a true influence may go forth from this place. . . .

### R. L. Nettleship to Rev. E. Thring.

*March 23rd*, 1869.

I have been asked to ask you to prolong the Easter holidays to ten days for the Jenkyns. Of course, as far as I am concerned, I see no reason why you should do so, any more than for anything else I have got. Nor do I know precisely on what principle you go in these matters; much less how far the extension of holidays is bad or good as a bit of school administration. However, as I feel very strongly that any success of mine belongs to you and the school, and especially to you in the present instance, I should be very glad if you thought this a good opportunity of showing it. I will not say much about your last letter, only this, that it came to me like the blast of a trumpet, breathing strength and courage.

### To the Same.

*May 9th*, 1869.

Thank you very much for the Commemoration Sermon. Every year these voices from the school seem to gather up into themselves more and more meaning; and in a certain way I feel as if my real school-time was only now beginning. Especially what you say at the beginning appeals to me very strongly just now. The contrast between the littleness and the realities of life, the growing sense of "the burden of the mystery," make themselves felt sometimes almost overwhelmingly. Particularly when one is grinding at some wretched little point of history or logic the feeling comes on, making it hard not to be perpetually standing still in sheer wonder and

mystification, which, after all, can never produce anything in themselves.

Into such a general sense of helplessness a sound like that of your sermon comes most helpfully.

I am in for the schools in another fortnight, and am at present rowing in our eight, so I have not had much time just lately to think about art. I can, however, tell you something of what I thought might be done. In the first place, it seems pretty clear that it is in Germany mainly that anything really deep about the subject has been said, excepting by Ruskin. So I should like to read some of their books, and perhaps to hear a professor lecture on ancient art. (I know there are one or two good men, who would be worth hearing so far as they go, though perhaps it is not very far. Welcker at Bonn is one.) Also one ought to get up carefully the facts of the history of art, studying them in connection with contemporary history, more especially with that of religion. Also to try and trace the general laws of artistic expression, and the common element which underlies painting, architecture, music, etc.

This represents the "study" side of the subject—easily written down, but of course enormous in extent, involving a considerable part of the history of the world. Alongside of this I thought of trying to work a little among the poor in London. I know it would require tremendous strength and courage, if only to keep from despair under the weight of what has to be done. Still, if possible, it would be a grand combination of the two kinds of life. I have just got a little book about London by a barrister named Bosanquet (a brother of one of our scholars) which seems very interesting. He has worked a good deal himself, and has a great idea of lay work.

Sometimes it seems a mockery to talk of doing things like these; "God is in heaven and we upon earth," but it won't hurt if they are said to the proper persons. . . .

## To R. L. Nettleship.

*May 10th*, 1869.

You have just anticipated what I was going to suggest, whenever the subject reached that point—the visiting amongst the

poor. There is an absolute necessity, if you are to carry out your great work worthily, that you should lay your foundations deep in the great realities of life, and that can only be by learning the sufferings and glories of the poor. This is the antidote, too, for the feeling of "vanity of vanities, all is vanity" which you speak of. It is overwhelming—it is intended to be overwhelming—to every one with a heart, till he gets face to face with the immortality, not of the world to come, but of this struggling, weary life of ours, which nevertheless in its great inner wide workings has that which no man ever really sees without heavenly light coming in upon him. So long as circumstances compel the intellectual view of life there does seem a strange mockery in all we do; it is so skin deep, so narrow, also so beyond our grasp; we are whirled along by a remorseless natural law, as men would say. But once plunge out of the circle into the great life ocean, and never more can any one who has felt the life power forget it or despair. Curiously enough, and it may be a help to you, the school is just founding an East London Mission. . . . If you joined yourself to this you would be heartily welcomed, and also, as it were, be doing our work. . . .

### R. L. Nettleship to Rev. E. Thring.

*June 7th*, 1869.

I have got a Second. As far as I am concerned it does not matter a straw. But I am very sorry for the school and you. I know it can't do you any real harm, but it would have given a completeness to it all to be able to say that I had got a First. I am speaking the simple truth when I say that to myself and my friends the result is rather laughable than anything else. It is probably due to the fact that I had not got up certain books accurately enough to please the examiners, who, of course, are quite right to be consistent with their own standard. It need not alter, either for better or worse, my own opinion of what I can do. No doubt harder reading might have made a First sure. But I feel that I have got from other sources, rowing even included, much that no mere reading could give. Still, when all is said, I am very sorry on

your account—very; but I will try to blot out any stain it may leave. . . .

### To R. L. Nettleship.

*June 8th*, 1869.

You know very little of me yet if you think I care for your second class. Hang the completeness. I do think that other sources, "rowing even included," have given you better things than a First. Nay, I am very much inclined to think that real enlarged views are against getting a First somewhat at Oxford. At all events, I care mighty little for any special honour. Humble true work, with heart and eyes open, with or without honour, is sure to do what God means it to do. Never think your class raises or depresses you a hair's-breadth with me. And as for what people think, I am not afraid for the school, and you have no reason to feel on that score. We shall be delighted to see you whenever you can come to Grasmere. I shall be delighted to have some talks. . . .

### R. L. Nettleship to Rev. E. Thring.

*September 16th*, 1869.

You will like to hear about my travels after I left you in Langdale. I met my friends at Wartdale, and the next day we walked back to Grasmere. I daresay you remember what a lovely day it was, for it was the one on which you went back to Uppingham; the colours in Langdale were glorious. In the evening we rowed to the other end of the lake, and walked up the hill by the Red Bank; it was a wonderful sight, the lake perfectly still and dim in the twilight, with the mountains brooding over it. We all went off by the first train on the Friday, Holland and I down to Bettws-y-Coed, where we stayed with Mr. Gifford, an uncle of his, from Saturday to Monday. What a beautiful place it is! The rivers were in their glory after the rain. It is curious to see how different the water is there and in the lakes; in Wales it is a rich brown, amber in the sunlight, and really glides over the stones, with a sort of oily lusciousness, so different from the thin glassy

water that hardly seems to touch the pebbles as it passes over them. The woods, too, were splendid, the trees throwing themselves from the rocks over the water in all kinds of forms and attitudes, oaks, birches, and mountain ashes. On the Saturday we had a magnificent walk through Capel Curig by Llyn Idwal and Llyn Ogwen, then to the Devil's kitchen and up the Glyder, and so down again to Capel Curig. From the Glyder we had a view of Snowdon which I shall never forget. It was a day that had cleared up after a misty rain in the morning—a day of lights and shadows. Snowdon stood there straight opposite us like a king, black and craggy and torn; up from the valley between the clouds came marching in white columns, passing before his face like a veil; and beyond, shining dimly through the mist, or bright against the sharp mountain line, was the sea blazing under the afternoon sun.

The Glyder itself is most wonderful, an absolute wilderness of stones—the kind of place one fancies Prometheus might have been chained to.

Monday we walked to Dolgelly by Festiniog, between 30 and 40 miles. Again it was a glorious day, and we saw glorious things; among others, wonderful views of a distant mountain-range, purple in the sunset. But the most wonderful was the sight of the mountains by moonlight, for it was dark long before we reached Dolgelly. The mysterious delicacy of the outlines, when all shape except outline has vanished, and still more the reflection of the outline black in the quivering water along the Dolgelly valley, were things that quite take one's breath away.

From Dolgelly we went across by rail to Ludlow, which is very interesting historically. We stayed at the Feathers, the old inn where I suppose Milton used to appear when he was a young swell. Then from Ludlow we went down to Tintern. The Wye, as a river, disappointed us miserably, it being low tide when we saw it; but the abbey made more impression on me, I think, than any building I ever saw. It looked as if it had grown out of the ground just as it is, with grass for its pavement and sky for roof and windows, standing gray and ghostly amongst those solemn woods, a real temple of God, lifting up its gables like dumb protesting hands to the world.

From Tintern we went down to Dulverton, on the borders

of Devon and Somerset, where Holland's family were staying. With them I spent ten very happy days, doing (what is a great luxury sometimes) "nothing particular," but drinking in the country and wandering about in the evenings a great deal, when there was always a great solemn harvest moon. When they had to go to South Devon to see some relations, I went to the north coast by myself and walked for three days from Minehead by Lynton, Ilfracombe, and Bideford to Clovelly, and then home. It is a wonderful coast, and I had one long blaze of sunshine the whole way. The gem of the thing, I thought, was about 10 miles each side of Lynton: the path winding along the face of the cliff, at every turn bringing you on a fresh point of view, with vistas of rocky points coming down to the sea, sometimes dark with oak-woods, sometimes purple with heather, and all along the presence of the sea, splashing at your feet, and stretching away in the distance, one great glory of blues and greens.

Altogether it has been a great six weeks for me, and not the least part of it, you will believe, was my ten days at Grasmere. It is a great joy to feel the power of taking in beauty and power of whatever kind, palpably increasing. It is a great joy, too, to be able to talk about "the breadth and length and depth and height," and to get out of the stagnation of conventionalities. To me also it is an intense pleasure to see and take part in a really happy family life, as I have been able to do both in Lincolnshire, at Grasmere, and at Dulverton.

## To R. L. Nettleship.

*September 18th*, 1869.

Your letter came to me like a soft old dream from the ivory gate (wasn't it), or a breeze that brought the breath of far-off forgotten flowers. Every inch of country you describe I have been over till you passed Lynton, and even then I know the kind of thing you saw. I have been several times in North Wales. Some of my happiest days of mere drinking in of delightful life have been spent in the scenes you speak of, and were recalled by your visit to them. From Portishead to Lynton, along the Quantock Hills, I rode with

my father and brother when I was seventeen, a most unforgotten week, galloping into Dulverton over the downs in the rain one evening. I think the change to the different kinds of scenery very valuable to one who can appreciate it and read nature. It is very curious as you observe the different *genius* that is incarnate; if I may say so, in a Welsh river from a Lake river; how entirely the soft rich colour alters the seeming nature of the stream, and makes the very water a different element.

What you say of the power of receiving impressions of beauty and truth is a deep and most significant reality. I believe that one of the most obvious tests to a truth lover that he is really loving truth and not a sham, not a Duessa, is the perpetual growth of capacity. One stands, as it were, on the shore of the great ocean, and dives into abysses of light, and on and on through sphere after sphere of life and its mysteries with a new nature almost, given of receptive, humble, awe-struck perception and feeling in each sphere, till an infinity of deepening power to receive in answer to an infinity of divine glory to be received gradually becomes apparent to the heart; whereas the mere intellect grasp keeps seizing facts and power along the surface in hard horny hands which become harder and hornier, and more incapable of sensitive touch with every fact they seize. Every year has been to me a softening of the impressible nature, and a clearing of the eye in all the fields of divine goodness, quite irrespective of the hard, hot, choking work of the external world and its attacks. I feel more and more how all right spirit life is a gladness and a glory increasing; how divine goodness is speaking in all tones that reach the heart with joy or sorrow, awe or ecstasy, everywhere and in all things, if we can but hear it; how completely the spirit within can be in communion with light independent of external circumstances, and yet how external circumstances and creation are the medium through which God speaks. And if it is indeed a speech of God, an ever present incarnation of the divine mind, then the power of reading the divine mind can only exist for those who are in accordance with it, the language must be foreign and unknown to any intellect force as such—to any traveller through the land who is shut out from the only channel of communication with its real life. You cannot

think how my feeling for scenery has grown, and all my existence widened as time passed. I am beginning to feel like a baby might when taken out of doors for the first time. I am very glad you have had so pleasant and so good a time, glad too to hear that you were happy with us. Please look on our home as your home, wherever we are, when it suits you to make it so. . . . As for me, I am back in the furnace again, but, I am thankful to say, stout-hearted and strong, and not, as has too often been the case, straining in weakness and weariness to keep level with the demands of the treadmill wheel which carried me with it pitilessly, though I seemed to move it. . . .

I have more or less completed my scheme for the government of Uppingham in future, and in about a month shall send it to the Commissioners, when a fresh phase of worry will begin. You cannot conceive how galling it is to the flesh to have to meet a set of irresponsible, clever, ignorant men armed with absolute power and see them dissect your own heart-strings in a clumsy omniscient way, and issue their *fiat* on the one great work of your life, and a subject you understand and they don't. The soreness is not lessened by having all the gilded shams you loathe and despise tacitly assumed to be the standard by which you are to be in a great degree judged. . . .

Thring had again offered his old pupil a mastership at Uppingham.

R. L. NETTLESHIP TO REV. E. THRING.

*September 16th*, 1870.

I feel the kindness of your offer none the less that I cannot at present accept it. The state of the case is something of this kind: we have just lost two of our ablest teachers at Balliol—Edwin Palmer, through his appointment to the Latin Professorship, and Newman through illness. Besides this, Jowett, who was a tutor, has become master, and so I suppose will not take so much direct part in the teaching. Under these circumstances I could not refuse to engage myself for a

time, at all events, to work for a place to which I owe so much, and of which I cannot but be very fond; and I have accordingly done so. You know without my telling you that I do not forget what I owe to Uppingham, but I hope that I can do my little towards paying the debt as well at Oxford, or in fact anywhere in the world, as there. And the circumstances do seem to me really pressing. Perhaps I realise them more vividly because they are more fresh in my mind than the wants of a school, but it does seem as if Oxford just now were in terrible need of earnest, large-hearted work, and that there are very few men who will give it to her. And there is this special interest about Balliol, that while I believe it teaches its men in a more really Christian spirit than any college, yet owing to the very small clerical element in it now and the unorthodoxy of many of its fellows, it has got a sort of cloudy rumour of infidelity about it, as indeed Oxford generally has in a great measure. Now it is important at the present time, when religious and secular, and Christian and atheistic, and other like words are being bandied about in the wildest and most ignorant way, to try to show at one college at least that men can be brought under high intellectual influences without necessarily lowering their spiritual beings, and that the teaching of philosophy, so far from estranging from God, has for its aim and aspirations the bringing us near to Him.

I hope what I say does not sound presumptuous. All talk about one work being "higher" than another seems to me very nearly nonsense; and if circumstances led me as straight to school as they do to college work, I should find in the former heights as great, perhaps greater. But having been brought face to face, so to say, with some of the great difficulties of Oxford life, and having felt, and still feeling, them so intensely myself, I do not think there is any other call at present strong enough to prevent my trying what I can to face them with God's help, seeing that I have fallen into the position which naturally requires me so to do.

I have tried to think honestly about these things, and I do not think I am deceiving myself. If you think I am, or see any vital mistake in what I have said, please tell me. Otherwise I must decide for myself, and this is my decision. . . .

Few things are more disgusting at the moment than grinding along a whole day over a pass on a sick stomach, feeding on weak brandy and water. Yet gradually "the outward man perisheth"—the stomach fades away—and there remain unimagined glories of snowy plain or towering peaks, or garden-like valleys, tinged with the sense of pleasant fatigue. We saw a great variety: first a real Swiss rural country, with sweet-scented pine woods, and rushing brooks and cloud-swept wolds, overlooked by bare gray mountains, with here and there a snowy peak, a land of chalets and goats and cheese, and peasants ugly and hard-worked, but hospitable and courteous. (What a wonderful charm there is about real rustic courtesy, and how seldom one gets it in the English classes.) Then Chamounix—a week of blazing sunshine, in which Mont Blanc stood as if cut out of ethereal marble against an azure sky, and flushed from white to gold and from gold to rose every evening. And then Mürren, from which, for a fortnight of rain and cloud and sunshine, we saw the great Bernese range right opposite—so close you thought you could almost jump across to them—gleaming through gauzy veils, or ghostly pale under heavy brooding clouds, or bursting like great angels through rifts in the rolling darkness. It is a most strangely unearthly thing—that apparition of a peak or far-off snowfield through the breaks in the clouds. . . .

## To R. L. Nettleship.

*September 21st*, 1870.

I think you quite right in your decision. No lesson has been more deeply impressed on my mind in life than never to do anything ὑπὲρ μόρον, in the expressive Greek phrase, for there is such a thing, but to accept implicitly the obvious fitness of circumstances as a guide, and take in the simple Catechism words, "the station of life to which it shall please (*sic*) God to call me," as clearly marked out by the main occurrences of His world. Whatever debt you owe to me you pay in the best and truest way by doing good true work in that station, and I do not think either of us need bestow a thought on our affection and esteem, beyond seeing in it the perfect security

that there can be no chance of any misunderstanding on the subject, and finding from this perfect liberty to follow right in an unbiassed way. Certainly there is no higher or lower work in God's kingdom; the deepest, purest love must be the sole highest, and who knows what shows or produces this best? But yet this does give a standard, just the one we have both thought of, the doing honestly the daily work when and where He appoints it. And I quite consider you have a secure call in the circumstances you have told me. . . .

R. L. NETTLESHIP TO REV. E. THRING.

*May 12th*, 1872.

Thank you very much for your sermon, which brings with it quite a breath of old times. . . . I cannot help seeing that there are many points in which I have broken away from what I know you hold to be truth; . . . and yet, on the other hand, when I read your sermon, it seems such a miserable mockery to talk about difference of opinion, when the spirit which lies at the root of that comes home to me with the absolute force of conviction. . . . I suppose it will be made clear some time; and one must be content to feel one's heart beat true at times to the old simple war-cries. God fulfils Himself in many ways, and if, as it seems to me, the spirit which you stirred in me has grown into something which you could not acknowledge as your own, I can only say that what is vital in it is still the same and will always be so, however different the forms in which it appears. . . .

Thring had little in common with the school of thinkers among whom Nettleship was chiefly thrown at Oxford, and the new influences around the latter gradually made their lines of thought drift apart. The separation was an equal pain to both. Still Nettleship continued to the last to look upon his old headmaster as his spiritual father in most of the fundamental questions of life. After his own death it was learned that for some time it had been his habit to read each

Sunday to the invalid mother to whom he was so devoted some of Thring's lately published school sermons. Who that ever knew the two men—the one so strenuous in his faith, the other so sincere and unaffected in his uncertainty—will doubt that their differences of belief or opinion have been "made clear" in the wider sunlight of another life?

To Rev. Godfrey Thring.

*November 27th*, 1864.

I am rather glad in my wearing life here to have a rational opportunity of expressing my own opinions. I quite agree with you in the sin, if you like to call it, of running any risk with other people's money; it is a sin . . . I abhor debt as I do death, and the having had that affliction on me has been little short of death. . . . Now for the other side. And first of all you are not listening to any outbreak of momentary passion, but to the fixed resolve of years of suffering. . . . It pleased God at the very beginning utterly to confound my first venture. . . . I am not going to enter into the history or to defend myself for the attempt. All I know is, I could not do otherwise and remain myself. I would have died for the cause then; I have worse than died for it in these ten years, and I do not repent now. This was the beginning of debt. You know roughly how it brought me under obligation to our family. . . . I have been as one who having risked his life and all in building a great ship, was bid not put the engines in and launch her, because of the risk. True, it was risk, but the other was ruin. I have been as one who, walking on a precipice at a dizzy height, had a rope round his waist constantly pulled by the loving anxiety of those below who did not see his steps. The expense of current things in getting afloat have been the means of making me so poor, and of rendering it so hard for me to pay this debt. In a great business, to have no capital to meet temporary causes of depression is fearful. All the steps I have had to take have been at a disadvantage from this fact. I have till lately been always below the power required.

Don't go thinking that I am full of notions of self-defence. All I know is, that I have been encompassed on every side with danger, difficulty, sorrow, and pain, and that I had rather commend the chequered web to God than to man, and that I could not go through it again and live. But mark this, whatever happens to me now, whether I live or die, come to shame or honour, I will stake everything on my wife and children not suffering by what I have done or being made poor by it, or deserted by God for it. Neither will the work perish. The shame may be mine; there is much I have no wish to defend. I am not blind to my shortcomings, but all I know is, a man cannot fairly judge what he will do in trials that cut his heart in two till his heart is cut in two. . . . Doubtless, too, I ought to have taken advice. This has been my great trial too. How could I help intellectually contemning judgments which neither believed in my cause, nor tried to master the actual circumstances, but with a cut-and-dried omniscience distributed blame from the clouds? In this varied web of government, men, boys, and business, something else was wanted than that. . . . Why, £1000 with trust would any time these last six years have made my life happy, given me power, have given me wealth. Nay, trust without the £1000 would have taken the sting from labour, and been health and gladness to me.

## To the Same.

*May 31st*, 1865.

Neither attach too much importance to my gloom. Man is a strange compound of contradictory thoughts and feelings. At the same moment it is possible to be in great mental pain, and yet beneath to have unshaken confidence—even joy. It is still more possible to gladly welcome the pain for its gains and heart-teaching. It is true, life has been and is stern to me to an extent I never dreamt of, but it has its consolations, and much of the worst is past. And though sometimes a natural pang crosses me as I think how different things might have been, it is checked at once by the thought that all that I most prize in life would have been lost had they been dif-

ferent. So from seeing the blessing of past troubles I learn to look on present ones with the same eye. If I believe this now when seeing through a glass darkly, how much more hereafter. You must make up your mind to hear from time to time much good and evil criticism of any man in my position. Constructing a constitution is not like carrying on a settled government, and even there, there will be much carping at honest work. I myself do not know much of my own life; even its facts soon become blended, and whether much has been right or wrong, God alone can tell. Things come so fast and have to be acted on in such quick succession that they cannot be followed as in quieter spheres. . . . The great lesson I have learned in life is the impossibility of judging others. Each must stand or fall by himself. Life is so complicated, so mysterious, that not to fail is the best that circumstances allow. Nay, I go so far as to think that what seems mistaken is very often, when honestly done, most blessed, and our misfortunes are our greatest gains.

## To Rev. A. F. Boucher.

*February 20th*, 1867.

I do care very much for education, and nothing can be wearisome to me which holds out any hope of advancing Christ's kingdom in this way. We make no great show of this, as I believe the end is better gained by quiet unassuming work, but my very life has been staked on the cause here, and every step gained has been life-blood spent, and success, great as it is, apart from the good cause, would be a poor compensation. If I am able to do anything specially for your boys I will not fail to do so. I really do think that their joining the choir is of value to them, particularly if they are to be clergymen. We have fallen on evil days in some respects, but at all events there is life abroad, and any life however struggling is better than a contented torpor. I trust men will yet go out from here who will be brave good soldiers for the King. It will give me great pleasure seeing you whenever you visit my excellent friend and neighbour, Mr. Barnard Smith. Excuse a longer letter. Time is to me the need of life.

To Rev. Edward White.

*March 18th*, 1870.

I divide the world broadly into two—builders and pullers down, construction and destruction—and I never find any feelings rise against a builder, however opposite even my own ideas may be. Obvious earnestness for God's glory shown in constructive efforts is always lovely in some degree, always capable of receiving thorough sympathy. And I am, moreover, so convinced that every man in earnest must not waste himself in chafing at the manner of work, but be fully content with the spirit of work, that I am sure nothing you are likely to say will call for any forbearance on my part. I have now read the *Mystery of Growth* through carefully, and been very much interested and benefited and cheered by it, and I shall read it again. I have put it down also for the school library. Of course I consider the statements embodied in those sermons to be deeply embedded in the Word of God, but I see clearly that there must be much difference of opinion on the reasons and manner of God's working, whilst the main facts are open to the poorest and most unlearned. . . .

To Rev. A. F. Boucher.

*March 31st*, 1870.

I do not think the idea of making a better school than Eton was ever consciously in my thoughts in that shape. It rather was a set determination to try and do true work, and act honestly by each boy, with a deep sense of the value of life, as a thing where no waste could be other than a sin, and a no less deep faith in the certainty that never leaving a boy to rot in neglect must result in raising the life and tone of the whole body. You have rightly named one of the greatest of my practical difficulties; nine-tenths of the boys who come here have first to learn that education is really worth something, and next, that they are able to get it. Had I ever had any idea of racing Eton or such schools, I should have folded my hands long ago, but that never was my object. I thought and still think that in time the best system will produce the

best men all round, but I would not have got up from my chair to make a few better scholars only; to make every boy a good and happy man, if possible, that I hold to be worth many lives. But during the time that reputation meant daily bread and the power of going on, it was very trying to see how heavily weighted we were in the race. Very trying, too, to find, as was and is the case still, our own success acting against us. I know many cases. I know one important private tutor who openly avows it, where the delicate or stupid boys are sent to us, as the only place where real care is taken, and the clever and promising elsewhere. This is a compliment one could sometimes dispense with. Nevertheless, I am thoroughly satisfied with all the main facts here; I can easily imagine less toil and more apparent fruit, but the solid beginning of a new kind of school life is laid solidly, and I have no fear of its being destroyed. It may possibly have a relapse here, but most assuredly there are those who will build it up elsewhere whether it does or not. Thank you for your kind and intelligent appreciation. It cheers me.

## To Rev. Edward White.

*December 10th*, 1870.

As long as man is man, so minds will split off from any conceivable statement of truth, but I think, as you know, that for communion the area should be widened to the utmost; for teaching and the clergy also wide in detail, but stringent on three or four main points. There is one thing rather lost sight of sometimes in these discussions, viz. *If* the dogmas *are true*, so far from being a yoke to the inquiring mind, they are sign-posts leading into that sheep*fold* where is perfect freedom. It *is* freedom to have a path in rocky wilds. It *is* freedom to have a guard in a jungle full of wild beasts. It *is* freedom to have a *fold* in the midst of wolves. And all inquiry tends to bring this truth home to a mind which is searching for truth under such circumstances. I do not want to walk into a lion's mouth. There was a time when I had to balance fearfully whether *Truth* was a sign-post or a yoke. I suppose all men have to do so more or less definitely.

I am indeed longing for rest. School life is a fearful strain, especially in a very unhealthy season as this is. As regards schools themselves, the actual construction of a school goes further in making it good or evil than people dream of as yet. I mean the machinery for training each boy, its presence or absence. Then in our busy active English life the independence and self-government within limits is a wonderful gain for men in their after life. So much do I think of this, that though headmaster here, I put my own two boys out of my own house into a master's and pay for them just as if they were strangers, goodness knows not, because I am burdened with money, but from an intense conviction of the value of the training.

Then, again, I may fairly state the majority of homes with which we have to deal, are of a far lower type than our school life, and the boys are greatly raised by coming into our atmosphere generally, whilst the boys from good homes always maintain their character and do well. Thus good is diffused on the average, and the mass leavened in a way impossible without the boarding system.

The question you raise about parishes and bishoprics is desperately hard, and in the second instance in the English established church at present quite insuperable from the size of the dioceses. Every man in earnest must despise sermons excepting as stray casting nets on the one hand, and as finishing touches on the other. There is no solid core of work in them *per se*. All of us clergy who have faced our parishes have been desperately put to to try and get at the people, and, excepting in the schools, have failed. My friend and Uppingham missionary, Alington in North Woolwich, goes out at the factory dinner-hour and reads and talks to any who will listen, and gets a good audience. But after all what is this, trying as the effort must be? I am a great advocate for seizing on any earnest man amongst the workmen and giving him rank and office and such instruction as he will bear, but this is only half the thing, the personal intercourse excepting between employers and employed seems quite impossible, and that is not a right basis for spirit work. I have thought if I ever put the sole of my foot on quiet ground again I would try once or twice a week expounding the Bible as I do in class here, and

also perhaps an evening of good English literature read and commented on. I think I could get hold of some in this way. We want, I think, not only more social intercourse but also more Christian talk as distinct from religious talk; I mean as interesting people in good views of common things. But whether it will ever be my lot to do any work of this kind, God knows. It seems unlikely. The selfish view of saving your own soul which leads to this perpetual lugging in of religion by the ears seems to me wrong, whilst the Christian view of loving God and God's works seems to me to lead directly to true high views of common life and work, and to send men forward amongst their fellow-men in a helpful spirit. . . .

### To the Same.

*May 20th*, 1873.

I will give the book you have kindly sent me to Mr. David, but, curiously enough, though I support music zealously from a sincere belief in it, I am an ignorant, careless savage, and know nothing about it.

Thanks for your paper; I value my "speculative interest" at £1, which I send you a cheque for. In sober seriousness I think it is the right end of the missionary stick, of which the wrong end is too often applied vigorously, and I am all the more glad to help because the work is American and not English—a Christian link and not a locality wall. I feel sure if men would hold fast to their own beliefs, but heartily and truly welcome all who love Christ and war against sin and death, the Church Catholic would have its earthly realisation. It is a broad, common ground of loving practice on which we must meet, and not an identity of doctrine, beyond the great love of Christ. I am sure that war, not peace, will be engendered by the modern panacea of community of pulpits and amicable spreading of butter, and tasteless wine and water, *without the wine;* but unity in the great objects of practical life is very practical and possible.

Not to mention your friendship, I am very strongly backed by Nonconformists in the school here, not because I ever blink my beliefs, but simply because I strive in a straight-

forward way to do the right without parade of party, and simply as right.

I have passed a severe time since I saw you last, but one of my miracles has been worked also. Here I stood as lonely as it is well possible to imagine to face this contest for principle, with seemingly no help, because I had stuck to my work, when lo! I received a letter from Liverpool one morning as I think I told you, asking whether the scheme did, as it seemed to do, take the control of the school out of my hands, and on my answer, they wrote back to say it was not my business to have to uphold the claims of the school, but the parents' business. And accordingly the Liverpool and Manchester parents have backed me thoroughly, and were ready to fight the matter in Parliament or anywhere. And in a moment, one may say, instead of solitary danger and toil, I found myself surrounded with an army of ready help. I have had an interview with the Commissioners, and all appears likely to go well.

To G. R. Parkin.

*September 14th*, 1874.

I have been waiting for some leisure time to write to you, and the exhibition examination, which is now going on, gives it me. We were so glad to hear that you got across all right. About a week after you left I went to Liverpool and saw one of the Canadian steamers, but I cannot say it altered my general feelings about sea voyages; somehow or other there is a kind of haunting smell which has made steamers its special sanctuary and home, and I don't hit it off well. I almost envied you the amount of bubbling interest and news which must have been tumbling about inside your ribs eager to be let out amongst your friends. . . . We spent a very happy time at the Lakes, and went home much refreshed. I have a poem to send you soon which David, who spent a fortnight with us, set me going at. I suppose another number of the school songs will be out soon, also our hymn-book. You shall have them. I don't know that there is much to say about ourselves. The busy monotony of school life, with its changings and frettings, like a river always in the same place, but always changing, goes on as usual. I feel as stuffed up as

usual. Your visit was like letting a whiff of fresh air into a sick-room, so full of freedom and hope and possible sunshine. And it has done me good. I see, though we are cramped and thwarted and crushed in our fleshly life here, that the true life, the work life is not cramped, but has a freedom of its own going like the wind where God takes it. If ever I get any spare time in this world, I shall, in spite of sea and smells, feel immensely inclined to cross the water, and if I never do, the dream, like many dreams, is a pleasant reality in one's heart and sings its own song there like a bird in a cage, happy though imprisoned. I got the books all right. Little Buzz is as bright as ever, and all are well. We had visitors, old boys, masters, and friends all the time we were at the Lakes, once we mustered 17 people. I wish you could have seen our annual gathering of old boys this year. We had 50 come in, and a cricket match, and supper in the Upper School for 130 people —a very pretty sight, and bringing much to cheer the heart too.

I sent Mr. —— £30 the other day for his parish, so Uppingham has some one who hears the name with pleasure out there, as well as yourself. I send you at once a little song on Loughrigg Tarn which David set me composing one day as we were in the waggonette. He has made it a four-part song—

A little tarn beneath the hill,
A jewel in the grass,
A little cup, where clouds and sun
In gleams and shadows pass.
Methinks the mountains round have caught
The blue sky and the rain
And hid them in their heart of hearts,
Then sent them up again,
To show to weary eyes that peace
Beneath the rocks may dwell,
And bid them wait for light to come
Born in its stony well.
So nestling in its mountain home,
The child of earth and sky,
It lies beneath the hill, but yet
Looks up with loving eye.

We are expecting a letter from you. All send best remembrances. God bless you.

### To the Same.

*April 7th*, 1875.

I envy you the space of the New World, its possible solitude, its youthful push of life. Here it seems impossible to clear an opening amongst the dead things that choke the stream, so one drowns not from want of swimming, or want of strength, but from want of room to swim or to exercise strength. I had a note from your bishop, and told him he was welcome to use the balance of our gift in any way he pleased. Mr. —— seems to have not had much in him. The fact is, the lower middle class in England is exceedingly effeminate, and has no means of getting strong in body, and accordingly I suspect missionary colleges will not do as much as they ought. The English missionary ought either to be the gentleman and public school man, or the labourer's son; there is nothing between that is really hardy. . . .

### To the Same.

(*No date.*)

I put the thought which came into my mind as I was writing to you into verse. Here it is. Your letter was very welcome. You will have had mine about the same time—

Friend over the sea,
Free as the eye to roam,
Prisoned and pent at home,
Singeth a dream to me,
"I'll come out to thee,"
Friend over the sea.

Friend over the sea,
'Tis but a dream, I know,
Nay, I shall never go,
Yet though it may not be,
Singeth a dream to me,
Friend over the sea.

Friend over the sea,
Free as the eye to roam,
Still in my heart at home,
Singeth my bird to me,
Happy, though caged he be,
Still coming to thee.

## To the Same.

1875.

I differ from you in not thinking the nine years you have spent in a thankless and comparatively barren soil and work as wasted. They were wanted to build you up, to store up in you the quiet reserve of thought and experience that will, please God, yet give you a great work for your hands. I have been more than twenty-seven years here. I cannot see any true outlet or end. Even at this moment I am trembling with a cowardly feeling of possible ruin. My efforts have been persistently thwarted.... The external current of school and government dealing with school has gone dead against all I believe in, or value, and I know not where I shall be able to lay my head a few years hence when unable to work, for I have saved nothing. Yet I believe, and I am sure, as far as I can form any judgment, that all these grinding years of trial and toil and trouble were blessings; that they were needed to purge out shams in myself and my work; to purify, to raise it, and that in spite of failure and obscurity, that in consequence of this secret seeds of living power have been sown in many hearts, and when I am dead and gone will bear fruit largely. You may wonder to hear me speak so anxiously still, but on my return yesterday I was greeted by the tidings that a boy had gone home from one of the houses with typhoid and died. We have found out the cause, and probably shall have no more, but the country is so easily scared, and any place which strives for honest good has so many secret enemies, and the townspeople are still so mismanaged, and, in fact, the dangers are so many that I never feel the slightest human sense of safety, and appear to live on here on sufferance. God only knows what adversity may not

even now at once seem to overwhelm us. I only know one thing, whatever comes, be it ruin or be it not, good and blessing will be the end, as it has always been. But I am feeling very weary and broken in spirit, though determined enough in my ultimate convictions. But it is hard to flesh to be so helpless, humanly speaking, with a great cause and one's all depending on such mean and inadequate power able to destroy all round. Nevertheless life, true life, only comes from the being made to feel the deep things of life by suffering.

Now good-bye. I wish you and yours a most happy year. And you must not think from what I have written that a settled gloom is on me and schoolhouse. I bate not one inch, but hold on, and trust in God and Christ for the end, even though I am horridly cowardly and mean-spirited at times about the immediate pressure or fear.

## To the Same.

*September 15th*, 1875.

As a fact, I have the support of many bitter dissenters as well as of moderate men, and there are boys in the school here, and always have been, whose fathers are not churchmen, and we have never had any difficulty. But then the parents are quite content to follow all our school religious routine and general teaching, and we are quite content to put out what we hold to be true without pushing it down individual throats. I have at this present moment in my house the son of an eminent dissenting minister, and we are on capital terms. This, however, would not furnish any evidence as to how Church and Dissent could be worked side by side as independent powers. The practical possibility of this is obviously one which depends on the people who have to be dealt with, and is a practical question which I cannot even offer an opinion on. We could not do it in England, mainly on account of politics and the existence of political dissenters. One thing I am convinced of to my heart's core: that it is hopeless to think of a first-rate school in which the headmaster within his own scope has not free and powerful religious influence to bring to bear. . . .

# CHAPTER X

## MUSIC

AT a very early stage in his work Thring formed the opinion that music might be used as a refining and elevating influence in school-training. So far as the traditions of the public schools were concerned, he was venturing out into an entirely unknown sea when he made the innovation of introducing music into his regular system of education. But he believed that, in addition to a generally refining influence, it could also be made a means of interesting and stimulating boys not specially open to intellectual ambitions. So one of his earliest school ventures was the engagement of a music master. It was characteristic that from the very first he determined that the music given to the boys should be of the best.

In inquiring for a master he writes :—

> We want not only a first-rate musician who has made music his profession, and is a master in it, but a man of personal power and go who can inspirit the boys, and breathe some enthusiasm into them.

By offering liberal salaries he was able to secure men of this stamp. The demand for musical teaching grew rapidly, so that in course of time the one music

master with whom he began his experiment required the aid of six or seven assistants, while one-third of the whole school took lessons in instrumental music. The school choir, with its hundred or more trained voices, gave life and beauty to the chapel services; the concerts of classical music became a marked feature in each term's school pleasures; on more than one occasion the choir went to the mission districts of the school in London to give concerts for the benefit of the poor. Some of the first musical artists of the day were induced to visit Uppingham, became interested in the experiment which was being carried out, and by taking part in the concerts kept before the boys a high ideal of artistic excellence. Thring's personal contribution to this department of the work consisted in the school songs which he composed. Full of spirit, and skilfully set to music, these songs are associated with every Uppingham boy's recollections of his school life. He was much consulted by headmasters in regard to the results of his experiment, and the example he set has been followed in other schools.

I am indebted for the following note to Herr David, the accomplished artist under whose direction school music achieved at Uppingham a distinction and excellence it has never acquired elsewhere in England, and on whose judgment and skill for more than twenty years Thring implicitly relied :—

Fifty years ago music had no place whatever in the curriculum of the great English schools, and it may be boldly asserted that Thring was the first of headmasters who fully recognised the value of the subject, and who assigned to it a not unimportant place in his scheme of education. It is true, an organist, who also gave some private lessons, was generally attached to school chapels, and choirs were con-

nected with the colleges of Eton and Winchester. But they were professional and salaried choirs, and no gentleman's son ever thought of joining them. It is also true that school concerts were not quite unknown, but they were merely "got up" for the annual festivities—they had no connection with the work of the school—and the programmes usually consisted of music of the lightest descriptions—songs, airs, glees,—now and then, perhaps, an oratorio chorus. The fact was, in those days music was generally looked upon as an agreeable accomplishment for young ladies, and as a rule an English boy would as little think of singing or playing as he would of working embroidery or knitting stockings. To do so was considered rather unmanly.

That Thring, himself quite unmusical, should have been the first to introduce music into such schools is certainly very remarkable. Like every great innovator, he was in this point, as in many others, in advance of his time.

In forming his plans for education, Thring was eagerly looking out for subjects outside the usual school range. He knew well that to give a living interest in classics or mathematics to some boys was next to impossible. His quick and well-trained eye at first drew his attention to drawing. The lovely scenery of his home county, the picturesque beauties of Eton and Cambridge, had deeply impressed him in early days, and later on his love and appreciation for art had been roused for life during his sojourn in Italy. He had a deep and lifelong admiration for the early Italian painters, for Albrecht Dürer, and above all for Turner. He looked on art as a great moral and spiritual power. That he should have recognised the analogous power of music—the perceptive organ for which, a musical ear, nature had absolutely denied him—is certainly a wonderful testimony to the man's intuitive judgment. But the deficiency caused by the absence of any musical ear was with him to some extent balanced by the extreme sensitiveness of his organisation, and by that power of human sympathy which pervaded everything he did and said and wrote. Although he would, as a rule, candidly confess his inability to make anything of, or derive any enjoyment from music, yet on some rare occasions he would be deeply impressed, and then invariably by something really great and

striking. Nobody who saw his face light up through a spirited chorus like the "Hallelujah" from the *Messiah*, or "Rise up, arise" from *St. Paul*, could doubt that he was deeply impressed. Certainly the underlying words assisted him in such instances to grasp something of the music, and the manifest enthusiasm of the performers also touched him.

The importance of musical teaching was probably first brought under his notice by his wife, who had brought from her German home a warm love for music and interest in it. The refining and elevating influences of *serious* music on those who were able and trained to appreciate it could not escape Thring's rare powers of observation. An art which appealed at least as much to feeling and imagination as to the intellect, that bugbear of his, could not fail to attract him greatly. And furthermore, the power of vocal music to enhance and emphasise the meaning of words appeared to him of great value. It was with a view to their being set to music and sung, and thus brought forcibly home to a large number of performers and listeners, that he wrote his school songs. These songs, so full of idealism and enthusiasm—how he delighted in hearing them rendered by a hundred youthful voices! There, at least, he thought some of the sacred fire that burned in his heart had caught the hearts of the boys.

The means by which he gave to music a prominent place in his school were simple enough. In the first place, he made the attendance on singing classes and music lessons compulsory, and subject to the same discipline as any regular school subject. But above all, he gave to his music masters his full personal support and sympathy. He would frequently attend the choir rehearsals, and plainly manifest at all times his interest in the musical work done in the school. He especially gave his music masters a completely free hand in the choice of methods and the selection of works to be studied and performed. He knew how true it is that "for the young the best is just good enough." As he himself, being quite unmusical, could not judge, he wisely left the management in the hands of those he had reason to believe could judge. He would never listen to outside suggestions and complaints. In early days the cry for more "popular" and less "classic" music was not unfrequently raised even within school circles.

But, like all men who are really masters of their craft, he had a strong distrust of dilettantism, and in the case of music would not allow it to meddle with the work of the professional musician. The results of this system soon became apparent. Music—good, serious music—became a prominent feature of Uppingham, more so than at any other public school in England, and it may confidently be asserted that the example of Uppingham in this respect has largely been followed elsewhere. Men like the late Sterndale Bennett, Joachim, and Villiers Stanford became warmly interested in Uppingham music, and by their frequent visits to the school, and actual participation in school concerts, gave an invaluable stimulus to the subject.

Lastly, it must be stated that Thring secured to his music masters a liberal income, and thereby enabled them to give sufficient time to every individual pupil, and thus prevent the teaching of music from remaining, as it often is, a showy sham.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE SCHOOL AND MISSIONS

WITH the ever-present conviction that the business of a school is to train up men for the service of God, Thring was always quick to adopt methods likely to develop the Christian as well as the intellectual activities of his boys. In this sphere, too, Uppingham was able to do pioneer work in one of the most interesting and important movements connected with the public school and university life of modern England.

In the first years of the school large sums were subscribed to support the parish church which the boys attended, and at a later time great efforts had to be put forth for the construction of the school chapel. In spite of this strain upon the school resources, money was almost from the first freely contributed to outside purposes on the broadest lines of Christian duty and sympathy. To interest public school-boys, drawn chiefly from the richer classes, in those less fortunately placed than themselves, seemed to him essential, under existing social conditions, to their growth in true life. "The rich boys must learn to help the poor boys," was Thring's remark in 1864 to Mr. G. W. Bell, one of the founders of the Boys' Home for destitute lads in Regent's Park, when he applied to Uppingham for

assistance. Mr. Bell mentions how year by year he was asked to go to Uppingham to tell the boys of the work which was being done, and how the Home received from them a liberal support for more than twenty years, while the headmaster, in discussing the subject or in forwarding gifts, always dwelt chiefly upon the good which the school itself derived from the help it thus gave. In the same spirit he induced the school in later years to found a scholarship of £30 per annum for the Blind College at Worcester. Often slight notes in his diary give expression to the satisfaction he took in such work.

A passage already quoted refers to £60 sent to India in 1865 as the first worthy offering Uppingham had made as a school. In the succeeding years many like contributions found their way to various missionary fields.

In one place he says :—

> I hope to-morrow to write to the New Brunswick clergyman, and tell him that we have £13 : 16s. from the masters, £10 from myself, and £24 : 7 : 6 from the school to send him, and also to promise him £20 a year for four years. This will cheer him at all events, please God. How strange this modern life is, with its wonderful network of intercourse, and thought, and feeling! To think of this man on the other continent, in the far north, having a thread of life vibrating with us. After all, it is not so wonderful as the vibration from thousands of years back still throbbing and thrilling in our hearts. Θεῷ δόξα.

An old Uppingham boy became first Bishop of Honolulu; another went to Japan as a missionary, others to India or Africa. It filled Thring with happiness to see the Christian life of the school thus going out to many distant lands, and his correspondence

shows that he was constantly contributing liberally from his own private means to forward the work of his boys. One writes from South Africa to describe the examination of a group of Kaffir lads for a "Thring Scholarship," another of a like examination of Mohammedan pupils in the Punjab.

A letter from the Bishop of Brisbane mentions a church which had been built in Queensland wholly by the efforts of Uppingham boys; other letters acknowledge large contributions for two other churches.

But the most significant mission-field of the school, and that which has had the most far-reaching results, was found nearer home.

The idea, which has since proved so fruitful, of a special school effort for mission work in the East End of London was first taken up in 1869. His diary for that year says:—

*April 17th.*—An excellent lecture last night from Mr. Foy for the Additional Curates' Society; one of the best I ever heard.

*April 25th.*—The school has determined to start an East London mission in consequence of Mr. Foy's lecture. We think we shall get £100 a year, and it will interest the boys. I am very much pleased with the idea. We had £17 : 18 : 3¾ for our special offertory to-day.

These two slight records indicate the genesis of a movement which since that time has had a wide extension among the public schools, and which has also been taken up by the universities.

For many years the school raised £150 annually to carry on this special work in a district selected by the Bishop of London as one most needing help. But Uppingham did more than send money to the London poor. It sent men, and this was what Thring most of

all valued. In 1870 Rev. Wynford Alington, a former pupil of the school, accepted the post of missionary curate, and was sent to work in North Woolwich, under the then incumbent, Rev. Dr. Boyd (afterwards Principal of Hertford College, Oxford). Here he remained till 1878, when he resigned to undertake missionary work in South Africa. The mission was then transferred to an equally poor district, Poplar, where it was under the direction of Rev. Vivian Skrine, another old boy of Uppingham.

Thring's idea was to keep the boys as much as possible in touch with the mission and its conditions. Every year the missionary in London or other friends of the cause came to tell the school of the work, its character, its progress, and its opportunities. These visits were returned. In 1872 a new church had been built in one of the poorest parts of the parish. This is what he writes in his diary of the consecration :—

*September 24th.*—Back from North Woolwich after one of the most remarkable days of my life, and one that I verily believe will mark an epoch in England. We took up forty-eight boys on Wednesday, housed them in London, and brought them on to North Woolwich next morning. In all, reckoning masters, ladies, and old boys, Uppingham mustered seventy-four strong on that day, for fifteen old boys came in, to my great delight and comfort. The Bishop of Rochester, who is a real man, was greatly struck with it, and spoke some words at the luncheon to the boys, which I think they will not easily forget. The service was very good; I was glad to hear from Anstey, who sat far down in the church, that the singing sounded very full and sweet, for we brought up a strongish choir, but I was anxious about the effect of their singing with the local singers, and I had told them to be careful to follow their lead, as we came to help and not to show off. All the boys who were able stayed to Holy Communion. The Bishop was much struck with that. He gave us an excellent,

manly sermon. I am sure that day will not pass out of our school life easily. To me it gave a most cheering feeling of life. I less and less set my heart on this Uppingham here and its buildings and the local work. I confess I don't feel much hope for the future, but in the life I trust I do feel an intense faith—in the seed growing somewhere, and this North Woolwich meeting was a kind of visible embodiment of that invisible somewhere, a sort of making known of the life that has gone out and of its world-wide character, as not wanting a place, a locality; as not confined and cribbed to one form or one kind of working. I am wonderfully cheered. England has never before had this fastening of a school on to real life work in the world outside. May it increase and spread. Alington must have felt his loneliness greatly swept away as he looked on the goodly array of his school-fellows, past and present, who met to join helping hands in his work. I trust to see this mission a great central pivot of Uppingham life, as much Uppingham as Uppingham itself to our best blood, even more so, as being a more tangible idea of living work to the ordinary mind. Thank God for this. Thank God.

*September 28th.*—The more I think of North Woolwich the more my heart rests on it. There is such a taste of life in it. Who can tell in these days what may become of buildings. Even now here in these buildings how much can I see of possible decay in the spirit within — how much of hostility in the world outside. . . . But the living hearts they cannot take away from us; they cannot quell the spirit which united us at North Woolwich, and made school and parish meet on common ground. That is real. . . . The boys seem to have been greatly struck with their visit. . . .

A similar happy visit was made by boys and masters in 1875, when a second mission church was consecrated. Speaking of this he says:—

We crossed the river and took train for Tidal Basin. Close there is the noble new church, and soon after our boys came with the masters from town, and I met the Bishop and Mr. Boyd, with Mrs. and Miss Claughton, and was introduced to them. . . . Then we had an impressive service in that noble

church, and a very large number of communicants. Then luncheon; and when Mr. Boyd said what had been done and given I saw many eyes fill with tears. Altogether, it was a grand day—a day not to be forgotten—a day, I trust, the school will carry in their hearts to many lands.

The work did stir the imagination of the boys, and the leaven of Uppingham example soon began to work.

*June 4th*, 1873.—A letter to-day from an old boy speaking of our example at North Woolwich having spurred on some people in London to do the same for the Black Country, and the praise he heard of Uppingham at a London party, and how proud he felt, which pleased me and cheered me mightily. I read it to the school. It will do them good. . . .

Of the work done at Woolwich the Principal of Hertford College writes years afterwards:—

My feeling of gratitude to the school for the help and sympathy it gave me so cordially when I was hard pressed in London, but deepens as the years go on.

Later, when the mission had been removed to St. Saviour's, Poplar, the method of keeping in touch with the district was changed. The chapel choir, together with the musical masters and ladies of the school, visited the place to give a concert in behalf of the poor. "If we can get this school to look on helping the poor as one of the chief things of life, what a glorious thing it is!" he remarks. "And already what a great movement, coextensive with England, has arisen out of our school mission."

In another place he says:—

It is a great thing to get the idea into the boys of giving personal help to the poor. I admit, too, I am proud, I hope not in a self-glorious way, of once more being the first to start a thing likely to be imitated and to bear good fruit.

To Lewis Nettleship at Oxford he writes advising him to take the chance which the school mission centre in London offers to come in direct contact with the actual life of the poor, as the best possible supplement to the purely intellectual atmosphere of the university, the best corrective of its unpractical tendencies, and the best preparation for high and true thinking on life subjects. The little seed thus sown at Uppingham has grown into a great tree, and but few of the great public schools of England are now without this special field of mission labour.

In the same broad spirit of practical Christianity was conceived in 1878 the formation of a school society for mutual assistance in good works, religious and secular. By associating the members, consisting of old pupils and masters, in a common and noble purpose, he hoped to perpetuate the bond and widen the influence of the school life. In whatever part of the world they might be, its members were to be free to call upon their fellows for help in any good cause they had in hand. A noble charter for future effort was that which he gave to this society in a line written at the time of its foundation, and now inscribed on a brass tablet in the school chapel: "Let the pride of Uppingham be to have the readiest hand and the most open heart to assist one another in good work."

Nothing could exceed the affectionate interest with which he followed those of his boys who threw themselves into missionary work at home or abroad, nor the tenderness of his memory for those who, as sometimes happened, died at the post of duty. The name of Wynford Alington has been mentioned as one of the school workers at the East End of London. An inscription in the chapel at Uppingham commemorates him:—

Sincere, consistent, self-denying, unwearied — willing to spend and be spent in the cause of Christ, he went as a missionary to South Africa, and died at his post—Oct. 10th, 1879.

It was a character which he could thus describe that more than almost any other stirred Thring's enthusiasm. The diary says:—

*November 20th.*—Heard this morning the news that my best and bravest, Wynford Alington, has passed away, dying of typhoid fever in Utrecht in the Transvaal. I cannot call it sad news, though to me it is in a way sad, for I never have known intimately for years so good a man. He stands out in my mind as the perfect realisation of unselfish, gentle, persistent power that I have ever been brought near to. And I can feel a warrior's joy at his call, even though I feel a great sadness at the thought I shall see him no more on earth. This very next week Mr. Bull is coming on the North Woolwich Mission. How much of mournful interest there now is in it all! Our first-fruits in the truest sense have been now taken. Glory to God who has given and taken!

*December 6th.*—Every day more and more brings out what an impression my hero has made. I marvel at it. He was so retiring. His example shows me how true all I have felt and said about life working has been. It comforts and cheers me to see the truth thus incarnate. When he fell ill the commander at Utrecht decided that he should be treated as an officer, as he had done so much work amongst the soldiers, sent the doctor to him, and despatched a mounted orderly after Mr. Ransome, who had just left him, and applied to the general for his sanction, which was given, and when he died they gave him a military funeral. Strange history! One little trait was very touching. The Kaffir servants make a rule of leaving a house where an illness is likely to prove fatal, but his Kaffirs stayed with him to the last, though he was not able, from the short time he had been in the country, to talk much with them.

*December 12th.*—Gervase Alington writes that an idea has been started which he does not like, of a scholarship in honour of his brother. I have written to tell him that I

also detest scholarships as a memorial. There is no reverence in them. They belong to the busy, bustling brain life, and are rough and ready ways of selecting raw material, with no particle of higher life in them, mere prizes of strength, mental wrestling belts, all the associations of the earth earthy. I would not couple any one I loved with a scholarship.

*March 1st.*—We had a discussion about the Alington memorial. I said I could not stand the idea of scholarships or prizes as a memorial, making a market of the dead, and that nothing would induce me to sell the noble dead, or profane their memory by the dust and jostling of intellectual struggles.

Thring's wish prevailed, and so some time later he was able to write to another old boy:—"We are just putting up a mosaic behind the altar—'The Adoration of the Magi'—in memory of dear Alington, that peerless knight of God's army."

In the exquisite bit of sacred art which thus adorns the school chapel Uppingham boys, new and old, may recognise at once a memorial of the pupil's noble life, and the master's ideal of the form in which honour could best be done to such a life.

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# CHAPTER XII

## MASTERS

THE circumstances under which Uppingham was built up by Thring made his relations to the men who worked under him different from those of the ordinary headmaster of a public school to his staff. In early days especially his position was peculiarly anomalous. It was necessary to find as masters not merely men of ability, but men who had money to invest in his great educational enterprise. Into the masters thus found he had to inspire faith in himself, in the future of the school, and in the cause which he represented. But while doing this he felt bound to retain that untrammelled power of almost autocratic government which he considered necessary, and which experience seems to prove wellnigh essential to the most effective headmastership. By temperament Thring was an autocrat, as any reader of this biography will long since have discovered. As headmaster he was one on principle.

It need not be said that men sometimes chafed under his strong rule. That they chafed under it very much in proportion to their own need of a firm controlling hand might perhaps be inferred, and seems very manifest to a student of the inner history of Uppingham. But the most restless man among them

could scarcely escape the conviction that in the concentrated purpose and unbending will of the headmaster lay the secret of his success; the secret probably of their school's existence, or, at any rate, of its place in the world. Nor, I think, could any Uppingham master say that he had come to the school under any false impression as to what he had to expect in the way of government. In making appointments Thring took pains to be definite upon this point, not merely with ordinary applicants for masterships, but even in cases where long-standing personal friendship or even relationship might have left room for a less pronounced statement of his policy and requirements. A few selections from his official correspondence with candidates for school positions, taken from various periods of his school life, will make this sufficiently clear, and will also throw light upon other points which he kept in view in selecting colleagues.

I ought to mention distinctly that we have a very definite school creed and system at Uppingham, which we believe to be the best in England. The school has risen through this system, and all hangs together as a complete whole, and whilst we all discuss freely anything likely to be an improvement, our main principles are settled, and we work vigorously as one body. I feel sure that if you study our theory as given in my published works, and illustrated in the school, it will commend itself to you as a true worker; but *it must do so* if you are to join us.

I send you some of our papers to give you an idea of our plans, and I think you should also read my book *Education and School*, in order to see how far you agree with my views, as we have a real system here which I have now for eleven years been bringing out through good report and evil report, and which I should not tolerate interference with or opposition to.

I think it well to put in writing that both from theory and experience I am so convinced of the paramount importance of unity of action that I expect when a law has been passed and is law that every master will carry it out *bona fide*, whether he like it or not, because it is law. And I should make very short work of any one who refused to do so, not on account of the thing in debate, which might be in itself trifling, but on account of the law and disobedience to law, which is in my judgment *deadly* in a society. I have had bitter experience on this point.

I am willing to appoint you to the vacant mastership in the school at Uppingham, the main duties of which I explained to you yesterday. I am, as you may suppose from the history of the school, a man of strong opinions and convictions on the subject of school system and construction, and you must be prepared to carry out my views loyally and faithfully.

I would mention in writing, as I did *viva voce*, that in these days of anarchy, I require you to come here with the present intention of supporting me and my system loyally.

I ought also to mention decidedly what you probably know, that we have a very definite school creed and system at Uppingham, and I would not permit any deviation from it, though we live in a very free way amongst ourselves and discuss the affairs of the commonweal together. Neither should I consider the building a house to give you the slightest lien on me as headmaster in case I felt it my duty (*quod absit*) to condemn your work. Your only guarantees would be the fact that the house being your own property, you can command the market at any fair rent for it for school purposes, and would have a prior claim—that is, I would not allow a house to be built to throw an already existing house out of the school unless under outrageous circumstances of rent, etc.; and secondly, that the school is not now on its trial, but that you join a body which has grown and become great on these principles of government. The masters who take boarders have mostly built their own houses. I should

consider a house for fifteen boys would rent at £100 a year. No salary is received by the boarding-house masters. . . .

To a brother :—

Of course you would come here with the full intention of carrying out my system as now established, the principles of which are laid down in my pamphlets. Also, as I mentioned on Thursday, whilst I hold that free discussion in most cases is good and praiseworthy, I utterly repudiate any claim that has been or may be hereafter advanced that the investing of capital here gives a master any title whatever to encroach on the headmaster's authority. This system was entirely set on foot by me, and for many years all the burdens and risk of it as a new system were borne by me alone. Men invest because they care for the system, believe it sound, and trust to my management. That management power I do not sell. I neither could nor would undertake the responsibility with my hands tied. No man would. Free discussion does not mean power to interfere, or angry resistance, active or passive, when a question is settled. On public grounds I am not afraid to subject my policy and rule to any scrutiny. But where justice is done to all each may sometimes think himself aggrieved. Neither do I pretend to be perfect, but I try to do my duty with a single heart. I work like a horse; no one can tell the petty incessant cares which come on me alone, and I ask the forbearance of those who work under me. . . .

In another case he says :—

There is no doubt you are able to be a valuable colleague; the question would be your willingness. I will speak candidly. Has your experience shown you that a great school must be a well-organised machine, a body without schism? Ability is a positive injury when working *apart*, instead of co-operating. I have had some painful experience of young men who, having proved their own ability, have forgotten that older men have proved theirs too; and though I believe I can most truly say I am not an exacting despot, yet a common cause which I have much at heart requires

that I should be sure, as far as I can, that in taking you I should be finding a fellow-worker instead of a touchy critic. Again, without intending to put a yoke around your neck, or to stand in the way of your real promotion, I require an assurance, if you come, that you intend *bona fide*, at present, to make this your permanent home. . . .

I need scarcely say how glad I should be to have you join me, and having seen the school rise from 25 to 170 by clinging to truth in spite of all difficulty, I perhaps feel more than another would the confidence of a good cause. First of all, there is no external interference whatever; the governors neither do, nor can, meddle with any of us. I am the only power over you, and whilst I hold to the necessity of there being one ultimate *fiat* in any society, my wish and practice is to make the government as constitutional as possible. We discuss most questions that arise in common, and I never shut my ears to anything that is to be said. In your own work you would have great liberty. I consider each man responsible for his class, and provided he keeps to the main school habits, do not meddle with him. I can honestly say I do not believe you would find your liberty unpleasantly infringed upon by working with me. Still, if a thing is after all decided on, I hold it is a necessity that it should be cheerfully acted on in any society. . . .

To a master on appointment to a house :—

I congratulate you on obtaining your wish. I sincerely hope that the duties and rewards of your new responsibility may find you daily better and better. There is only one secret to make this so—the putting first always the boy life and its good. Life is infinite and gives infinite interest to him who studies it for Christ's sake. All else passes. As regards myself, your good work will always reward me. . . .

With the offer of a mastership :—

I offer it to you out of sundry candidates, because I believe you have a teacher's heart and will care for the boys, and improve in power of teaching in consequence. A lecturer soon gets his subject into a perfect form, and then

it becomes a bore to him. A teacher never does, for his subject is the human being, and the problem is ever new. We shall want your history power, as we are reorganising our history scheme. . . .

I wish to be plain about the main points, though there is no need to write at length in the first instance. My own beliefs are decided Church, but I am *broad* towards other people who are religious, but no irreligious man can be appointed by me. Again, I am very strong on the matter of *teaching*, by which I mean applying knowledge to the individual boy, however stupid he may be. I consider it a great science of infinite interest. You will have to take a low class if you come, and unless you take that view your place is not here.

To a candidate for a mastership :—

I quite agree in your view of religious influence. I am a strong churchman; my only desire has been to do a work for Christ. But I believe my master condemned all proselytising when he condemned the scribes, and that all attack of others is wrong. So I never permit anything but the teaching of our own truths without any attempt to overthrow the beliefs of others.

Again, I want a master with go and teaching power for a low class. By teaching power I mean that a man looks on the boys as his subject and on his books as things to be adapted to them, and accepts as his motto, "the worse the material the greater the skill of the worker." Thus a low class is not low work. Again, I have been at work for many years and have decided views on education, and I expect the men who come here to carry out those views, though I leave a good worker to work in his own way.

There is the following note in the diary of a discussion with a master who had been for some time at Uppingham, and was now considering the question of attaching himself permanently to the school :—

I told him I thought that was rather his concern than mine; that he had been here long enough to know our ways

on the whole and to be quite sure, if he considered matters, that I was not likely to spare any man if he stood in my way. That I could say that I had acted in all good conscience here to this day, but that I would go over my own son if he rebelled and marred our work. That I did not like fighting, but if I fought I liked being licked still less, and had stood at bay here against the world and masters too with ruin at my feet, and did not fear, I thought, the face of living man. He knew our life; it was for him to consider whether it suited him. We have been pretty plain spoken to one another, and he has letters of mine to the same effect.

Of a master he says:—

He must learn the terms of the government here, which he seems to consider a pure democracy of which I am the executive. He must find out that neither in principle nor in fact am I going to give up the supreme command in a place entirely created by labours and sacrifices which have left me still in debt, and which oblige me to sell to him much below its value and at a great annual loss the house he now lives in.

Again:—

I mean to deal with the independent grumbling with a high hand.

Under conditions thus clearly stated men accepted service at Uppingham. It was perhaps easier to state conditions than to ensure their being fully observed. Loyalty to a great man and a great cause makes its demands upon subordinates and followers. Critical battles could not be won if every subaltern asked the why and the wherefore of each movement, and stayed to discuss when he should be acting. Thring himself thought that on the whole he had failed signally in leading the men around him. Criticism in abundance he could always rely on having—of obedience he could not be so sure.

As a leader he certainly made large demands upon his followers. His convictions were so intense, he saw so clearly the path along which he must move to his mark, that he had little patience with men of less insight, or men of weaker purpose. "I am sick," he writes, "of the half-gelded characters who cannot see practical truth, *semivirique boves, semibovesque viri*, half calves, half men, who, because something can be said on the wrong side, lose any clear, sharp conception of there being a right side."

So no small part of the battle of school life for Thring was in his relations with masters. Much loyal co-operation he certainly received, and this he was always ready to acknowledge. But there was much hesitating and half-hearted support, which made his uphill battle harder than it would otherwise have been. Time after time he laments that the energy which should be given to his boys is frittered away and exhausted in dealing with masters' quarrels, listening to masters' "jaw," or repressing incipient rebellions in his staff. Let it be remembered that his experience is not singular. "The boys are the lightest part of it; the weariness of the task lies in managing the thirty masters." This was the reply made but very lately by a distinguished headmaster of one of the best known public schools of England to a remark about the crushing weight of care apparently involved in being responsible for the welfare of 500 boys.

The story is current in school circles that another well-known headmaster owed his success in managing a difficult staff to the fortunate possession of a deaf ear which could be turned in bland attention to critical and argumentative assistants at masters' meetings, without biassing the final judgment delivered when the

debate was closed. A fable, perhaps; but fables do not become current unless they furnish illustration of truth.

But Thring had not the deaf ear, nor yet the placid temperament or the easy tact which might have furnished substitutes for it. The very qualities which made him a great master of boys and a leader of educational thought disqualified him in some measure for patient dealing with ordinary men. He saw by intuition truths which others reached only by long processes of thought and debate; he saw them with a vividness which made him impatient of those who only realised them dimly.

Other men flagged, he never did. In thirty years he was never once late for first school, and the fact was but a type of the standard of school duty which he fixed for himself, and expected to find in others. Other men like to rest on their arms and enjoy the fruit of victory after the long fight; with him success suggested only new fields of endeavour. Starting with higher educational ideals than any other headmaster of his time, his views kept widening with every step made in advance. Prepared as he was himself to make any sacrifice for the welfare of the school, it was probably demanding too much of human nature when he expected each master to be imbued with the same spirit of self-sacrifice.

His attitude towards men who had invested money at Uppingham and were inclined to presume upon this circumstance was very determined.

The diary says in 1863:—

The last Saturday of a very severe quarter; one of the most severe both in work and fret that I have ever passed. . . .

The floating notions of masters that their investing here was a favour to me and a tie and claim on me have come to the surface and broken out with great danger, and in H——'s case with great pain to me. But this I never will for a moment concede. Their interest and work entitle them to a respectful hearing, but it is no ground for rebellion. I have written to Mr. C—— telling him my terms if he stays here, and laying down very strongly that if he builds a house here, he does it because he trusts the system and trusts my management, not that I sell any fraction of my management to him or any one else.

To a house-master he writes:—

You spoke to me of your claims because you built. You have no claims. You built to suit your own interest, and only by four-and-twenty hours cut out another man of whom I have a very good opinion from doing it instead. To bring this to a clear issue, I utterly deny any claim, and if you do not agree with this, be good enough to send in your resignation to-morrow, and I on my part will undertake by February to have a successor in your house who shall pay you back every penny you have spent, though the house is far from satisfactory, and not what I was led to expect. . . . There are only three men here who have any money claims on the school—Mr. Hodgkinson and Mr. Baverstock, for the risk they ran, Mr. Witts for his liberality. No one else has any claim.

The following letters, written on the appointment of a master, will make this position clear, and they illustrate the method pursued at Uppingham in maintaining the schoolhouses, fixing the terms of succession, and defining the relation of masters to the school:—

I have been thinking over the matter, and arrived at the conclusion to appoint you to a mastership here at Christmas next on the following terms which we have already more or less discussed.

You undertake to buy Mr. C——'s boarding-house at the

cost of £3400. The house holds our full number of boarders, thirty, plus a scholar, and is sold to you by Mr. C—— for the same sum that he gave. There is a mortgage of £1300 on the property which can remain if you like.

A master receives £65 per boy out of the £75 charged. For two years you would be required to pay 5s. a quarter for each boy in your house towards our building fund, and to make a payment of £50 within that time for the same purpose, and pay on each new boy in your house £1 entrance for the same purpose.

I lay great stress on the diet and living of the boys, as I consider it belongs to moral training, and I require your house in this respect, more especially in the matter of beer, to be kept up to the standard kept by my own house. . . . I also wish you to employ Mr. Bell as the doctor for your boys. Of course our school laws and system must be yours also. I believe there is no other point to mention, unless perhaps to state that I wish the extra masters, who are thoroughly superior men, to be supported. I think you will find them agreeable companions, and not be unwilling to take my view of their efficiency.

There is no difficulty in answering your question. Your house has so much the best situation in public estimation as more than to make up for any want of beauty which is shared by some others. This advantage is sure to increase with every improvement made to the school precincts. There never has been any disadvantage in filling up vacancies, so there can be no guarantee on the matter. I make the demand that the house should be bought because the present occupant has been forced suddenly to leave after a very short occupancy from no fault of his. Under similar circumstances I should make a similar demand on your behalf, not otherwise. I am under no difficulty as regards the house; I could sell it to a satisfactory man to-morrow who would eagerly take it. . . . As regards change of house, though I think you will never dream of doing so, should you have worked well, I should promote you in your turn, if you thought it promotion, to any other house you liked that fell vacant.

Supposing that I found it necessary to give you the six

months' notice that always vacates a mastership here, or you did the same to me, *whatever* the cause, I should endeavour to get you clear of the place without loss or further inconvenience, but I will not enter into any engagement with you to get the house bought. I did not do so with C——; I have never done so. A master comes here on his own judgment that it is worth his while to do so. I look upon that part of the business as a bare trade fact, and enter into no contract whatever beyond giving the appointment on certain terms, which terms are framed *quite independently* of a man having invested capital or not done so in the school.

Every master here holds as a master, not as a house owner. Nevertheless I do my best, as I think any head would, to make things easy for men who go.

A letter written to one of his staff suggests the kind of difficulty with which he had to deal, and the temper in which it was met.

I am not a constitutional monarch in the sense you use the term. I am as one listening respectfully to my parliament, but with full liberty to pass or reject their bills. You *cannot* share the main responsibility of the school if you wished. I wish you could. My position is far more that of a military commander who must act on his own responsibility, however much he may listen to advice, and who is liable at every turn to have great plans smashed by his officers acting in a piecemeal way, as I have had here again and again. . . . I wish to goodness I was not head here, but as long as I am, to the best of my power, I will do my duty by all and will not be the mere executive of a majority. I bow much to well-considered opinions, but none of you sit in the centre of the web and look along all the threads as I do. And I never mean to give up to another hand the final control of anything, though I strive as much as possible to engage the co-operation of others. The system I have pursued in this has made this school what it is, and I am not going to alter it now.

And again:—

*February 16th*, 1869.—This morning I spoke very quietly and firmly to the assembled masters on the matter of house management and treatment of the boys, in consequence of complaints that have from time to time been made; I told them I thought it necessary to lay down the basis of the school here clearly, and to point out that any shortcoming in this was a far more serious offence against our system and society than a shortcoming in teaching, as it touched the life and training in a far more fatal way, and that I should consider any case either of niggardly or neglectful management, clearly proved, a thing which would bring with it dismissal from the mastership. Some men made a few observations which had the effect of bringing out my meaning better, but it was listened to very quietly, and I feel greatly relieved at having had it out, and condemned so strongly the selfish habits creeping in.

He insisted strongly on exclusive devotion on the part of his masters to their school duties.

While glad to find as masters men who were clergymen and had some experience in parochial duties, he yet did not think that school and clerical work could be advantageously mingled.

Writing to Chancellor Wales on this point he says:—

I have never seen reason to doubt the truth of the principle on which I based the school originally, that it is impossible to do clerical and school work together. The work of a clergyman requires undivided attention if properly done, so also does that of a schoolmaster. I have tried both. I cannot betray the trust reposed in me by the parents or permit any master to do so. . . . In early days, as Mr. William Earle knows, the giving up his curacy was the condition of working under me on my system.

To a master:—

I am greatly surprised at your note. There is an iron rule and always has been prohibiting masters from taking

duty. I have taken the trouble to refer to my original letters to you on your appointment. In the very first written I find the words, "that no parochial duty is either required or *permitted*,"—the word underlined, as above, and I incurred much ill-will in this neighbourhood on account of not permitting any master to take duty for the neighbouring clergy. I consider a master as bound to be in chapel as to be in school; I consider the regular attendance of masters at their posts in this quite as important. If masters have broken this great rule without informing me I am ignorant of it. . . . Excepting in cases of absolute necessity, after leave asked, no master must be absent from his Sunday duty at Uppingham, or leave his house and chapel class.

To a member of his staff who had proposed to undertake duties outside the ordinary school routine, he says:—

A long experience and careful observation have quite convinced me that the proportion of work assigned here to each man is as much as a hard-working man can do justice to, and will bear no increase if it is to be thoroughly done. I am well aware how much apparently can be well done, but I use the above words in a strict sense. But supposing this objection removed, a still graver remains behind. Many years' study of what are true principles of true work have burnt into my very existence the conviction that no good work is done where two things are attempted. Here, as in religion, no man can serve two masters. In my opinion every power you have, all your time, and all your knowledge, will find full scope in your class work and the teaching required by your class if it is ever to be first-rate. My whole efforts here have been mainly directed to the one point of giving each master undivided work and interests. For this I have shrunk from no sacrifice, because I believe everything depends on it, and if my own experience is worth anything not a wide circle and variety, but the power of analysing and adapting one good subject to the needs of a class, preserves the teacher from becoming a hack, and this cannot be where the work is divided. . . .

I assure you I have a very high opinion of your heartiness and zeal, and think you in many important particulars cut out for a master's life, but steadiness and concentration, the power of making a common subject give up its *hidden treasures* is, and must ever be somewhat wanting as long as novelty has such charms. . . . I should not waste my time in writing in this way if I had not a great respect for and real interest in you. I am well aware that a few courteous lines would have exposed me to no misconstruction, and have answered every purpose but one—an honest appreciation of an honest offer. It is from no ignorance of official expedients that I do what I do, but from a thorough feeling for your genuine power and life, and a thorough desire to give it honour to the utmost of my power.

In fixing the new constitution of Uppingham School, Thring himself suggested the insertion of a clause providing that the headmaster should be subject to dismissal at six months' notice without reason assigned. On the other hand, he claimed for the headmaster the right to dismiss assistant boarding-house masters without their having the privilege of appeal to the governing body. Both these points he considered essential to the most effective working of a great school. I find a note among his papers, apparently written in answer to some question, bearing upon this point.

In my opinion the boarding-house masters and the headmaster ought to be dismissible without appeal. Occasional acts of injustice and occasional suffering are far preferable to the heavy, constant downward drag of bad masters and the difficulty of getting rid of them. I believe the main cause almost of inefficiency in schools is the nerve and courage it requires to deal with bad masters. A headmaster will endure almost anything rather than have a disturbance with a master who is in a position so responsible as that of a house-master is, and over a series of years amongst

the number of such masters there is a constant downward drag.[1]

In another place he says :—

The fact is, no cause has more dragged down schools than the difficulty of getting rid of bad masters, head and assistant. No case can ever be proved against a schoolmaster.

A case can be proved against a bad man who may be a schoolmaster also, but the faults which make schools useless and unworkable *are incapable of proof*. Moreover, a headmaster will do almost anything rather than proceed against an assistant master. It is like breaking your windows and letting in the storm on a winter's night.

Again, assistant masters as a body are often ignorant of everything necessary for carrying on a system and are full of crude insubordination.

Governors, again, as a body, often have been, and often will be, by the present system, a great incubus on schools, as it is not always possible to find competent men, and if competent intellectually, they are non-workers—live statues, without interest in the question or understanding of it. . . .

A Court of Appeal is a roundabout statement of the simple fact that masters shall be rendered more incompetent than they are, and that it shall be impossible to dismiss masters for incompetency.

It will be observed that the arbitrary system which Thring thought best in dealing with assistant masters he was ready to have applied equally to himself. In his opinion the temporary interest of the individual should, in both cases, be subordinated to the permanent welfare of the school.

I doubt, however, if he carried out his principles in practice as vigorously as he expressed them in theory.

[1] In the case of assistants who had not the naturally strong position of boarding-house masters, he thought that some opportunity of appeal might at times be a necessary protection against the action of an ill-tempered or injudicious headmaster.

Life would have been easier and pleasanter to him if he had done so. More than one master who persistently thwarted his plans, gave but half-hearted support, or who fell far short of his ideals, and so was a constant thorn in his side, was suffered to go on at Uppingham, year after year, simply because the headmaster's heart triumphed over his head. In a note written in 1872 he says of a master:—

> I know the boys despise him, yet I feel sure it is not right to turn him out, and, perhaps, the very fact of his foolish ways may be to them a great training, as I hope it is to me, for certainly my patience is sorely tried, and I am always in some dread lest the good feeling of the school should give way and something unpleasant happen between the boys and him. I remember when a young man what short work I made in my judgments of people who were not up to the full mark, how readily I turned them adrift in my mind, and condemned people in authority for not doing so. I think I am wiser now, and act more in accordance with God's plan of the world in bearing patiently with very imperfect instruments, provided they try and do their special work fairly well, even though their collateral threads are poor stuff. At least, I believe justice never can be wrong, and that justice means much longsuffering.

Thring was far from unconscious of the faults of temper and errors of judgment which were mingled at times with the earnestness and sincerity of his work. They were, indeed, constantly before him. To the outside world he usually presented a front of absolute self-confidence. In the assertion of his conceptions of truth he was positive, not to say aggressive, and his faith in the accuracy of his own methods seemed absolute. He appears to have thought this self-confidence instinctive and hereditary, and speaks of a letter from one of his brothers as "written with all the

infallibility of our race." But behind this external air and inward feeling of assurance there was also a constant self-examination and searching of heart as to his motives, his genuineness, his singleness of purpose, his faithfulness to the work which he believed God had given him to do. Nowhere was this more manifest than in his dealings with the men who served under him. Proofs of this might be multiplied, but a single illustration will at least explain my meaning.

He had for some time been particularly anxious to get rid of a master who had been a sore trial to him at Uppingham. This master was a candidate for a headmastership, and Thring was told that his recommendation would virtually carry with it the appointment. Of this he says:—

I don't know that I was ever more tried in the speaking of truth than to-day; more tempted on many sides, but I am thankful to say I have been true. . . . I could not say it. I feel so strongly, and always have felt the conviction that he is no ruler. I was most tempted—tempted by my desire to get rid of him very strongly, tempted by my wish to do him a kindness, tempted by my dislike to stand in his way, tempted by the thought that my opinion may be wrong; and that to say so little would be enough. But no—I do believe it, I always have believed it, and I was asked in a way which would make it false to conceal this. I said all I could, but just not that one thing which would certainly have rid me of him, and I fear I am saddled with him here now permanently. But I am comforted in having resisted the temptation, which was all the worse, as making me the instrument of what he would deem his punishment, which I dislike the feeling of even more than I dislike not getting rid of him by a εὐθανασία. . . . I am strangely moved by these conflicting feelings, but I am quite sure I have been honest, as I have held the opinion in my heart when I liked him equally with now when I do not, and the not liking him is a most powerful reason for getting rid of him, even if it did not set me more than

ever to scan motives and be careful not to do an injustice. Yet, oh how I wish it had not come to me to be the instrument against him. I certainly have lost respect for him very much during these trials. His judgment on men seems childish and on facts not much better.

One more letter is added by way of illustrating the relations which existed between Thring and his masters. It was written to one whose name will always be closely connected with his in connection with the early history of Uppingham, one who had done much for the success of the school, for whom he felt the strongest affection, and for whose loyal support he was never tired of expressing the deepest gratitude. There came a day when they differed widely, as strong men will, on questions affecting the school.

Thring writes :—

*February 16th*, 1863.—I know there is that between us which no others here share, and am perfectly aware that your feelings have moved you in these matters. I never can forget the past; the recollection will not be effaced or diminished; no change can alienate it, or prevent the links being renewed at any time. But the past was based, in the Psalmist's expressive language, on our walking in the house of God as friends; on our counting no feeling, no interest, no personal matter higher than the common cause, the great work of our Master. So long as this was the case, nothing divided us; when it shall be the case again, nothing will divide us. But all my life here has been devoted to this; in weal or woe no private feeling or private interest, God be my judge, has stood between me and the end. I know the cost; I do not repent it. I know what I might have been; I know what I am, but still "the work goes on and slacketh not." . . . But whether the manner has been right or wrong in me, no society could endure which allowed such anarchy. . . . I have learnt to believe that even the evils of life, in a

good cause, are made to bear good fruit, a thought which almost makes my gratitude greater and affection stronger when out of trial comes forth good, than it would have been without the trial. For you my feelings are in one sense quite unaltered. Your place may be empty for a time in my heart, but no man can step into the empty place or fill the void. There it remains whenever you choose to take it again on the old footing. It is not any personal feeling, but the eye fixed on the invisible standard round which we are ranged which will make us one. . . .

Partly owing to the differences of opinion referred to, partly to other circumstances, this fellow-worker withdrew from Uppingham. Years afterwards, when dying, one of his last requests was that he might be buried as near as possible to his old head master.

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## NOTE

SINCE this volume was in print, I have, for the first time, met with a copy of the full report of the proceedings of the first conference of headmasters at Uppingham. A speech made by Thring on one of the questions which came up for consideration seems worth preserving here. A headmaster had proposed that some special effort should be made to secure the adhesion of the great schools, and had suggested that to this end it might be advisable to appoint the headmaster of Eton President of the Conference for a certain number of years. In the discussion which followed, Thring said :—

"I cannot be suspected of not appreciating the great schools in any opinion I may express. I was nine years at Eton. I am a Kingsman, with my name still on the College books; I examined at Eton for four consecutive years for the election to Kings, and am thoroughly sensible of the wonderful advantages of my old school. I speak of Eton as the one I am best

acquainted with, and take it as a type. But our cause, I conceive, is in one sense quite distinct from that of the great schools. We take our stand on work, and life, and progress; and here, I think, for many reasons the true power is with us; we are stronger than they, and should only injure ourselves by not asserting this. I perfectly understand the value of rank and wealth. To take a comparison, I for one distinctly see what an advantage it is to be Marquis of Exeter, Master of Burghley House, with a great fortune to support this position; I am the last man to withhold from duke or marquis their honour or their power; but, on the other hand, I can take an honest pride in being a schoolmaster, in my work, and my experience, and if school life is the question, then I cannot give way to rank, because it is rank, unless it is right, and has experience also. This seems to me the position somewhat of the great schools and ourselves. If they come in on the basis of working power and life we shall be glad, but we can acknowledge no other common basis. Eton I hold to be one of the most difficult and insoluble problems of the present day, not because the men who are working Eton want zeal or energy, or earnestness, but because they are hemmed in on every side by an unpleasant glory that belongs to the past, trammelled by a blind affection, which means contentment with old machinery and usages, and would show itself in a very different way if the shield was turned round. Our schools depend absolutely and entirely on the vitality of progressive work; on this we take our stand; on this we are prepared to challenge all comers, and I do think that true, hearty, and fairly untrammelled work on the one hand, and an obsolete glory, a trammelling prestige and intense difficulties in the way of true progress on the other, form a very awkward condition to begin with; and if this is to be got over, as I hope, there seems only one way of doing it, to make life and progress the basis, and live in the hope that progress will prevail. If at the present moment we put ourselves in any attitude but that of simply inviting co-operation, there is but one other lot—we must be slaves. And that I do not feel inclined for. To me Eton seems the perfection of a school in external advantages, a fairyland (I speak with no comparison

or disrespect to others). It has wonderful powers of a certain kind, and earnest men using that power; but when I come to progressive work, the means of doing it thoroughly, and the chance of those means being seen and brought to bear, there I stop; on that ground we stand better than they; we are better able to work, more alive to the necessity of it, inclined to search and see, comparatively unfettered in carrying out our discoveries, and we do carry them out more effectually. If they are willing to join us on a basis of common life and progress, we are most willing to have them, but we do not want their name if the basis is not true. We wish to stand as representatives of living progress, and to keep our arms open to receive adhesions from all schools, the great schools especially, even if it be for a hundred years. No lapse of time, or unwillingness to recognise our Society, if it existed, ought to stand in the way in the least of our being always ready to give a friendly reception to a newcomer, whether he come late or early. I can say the great schools have been exceedingly courteous in all the communications which have passed; I trust they will be willing to take our ground of thorough true life and progress as their ground, and meet us on it; but so long as they cannot do so, if they cannot do so, their joining us will not be strength but weakness."

END OF VOL. I

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